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ELEMENTARY EQUITATION

BARETTO DE SOUZA





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ELEMENTARY EQUITATION



(Frontispiece)

FIG. 1.—PLEASURE-TRIP ON HORSEBACK.

Mr. and Mrs. Bartholomæ (of New York), pupils of the author, on a pleasure trip with two friends and a professional horseman. Showing correct grouping (and distancing) in a party-ride. Compare the positions of the different riders. (The first horse on the near side is "heeling" badly with his near leg, showing wrong bend at the knee. The horse in the center of the second line is heeling also, although less than the first one.)

ELEMENTARY EQUITATION

Principles of Horseback-Riding

BY

BARETTO DE SOUZA

(COUNT DE SOUZA)

*Illustrated under the Author's Direction
With Photographs and with Numerous Drawings*

By VICTOR NICKOL



NEW YORK

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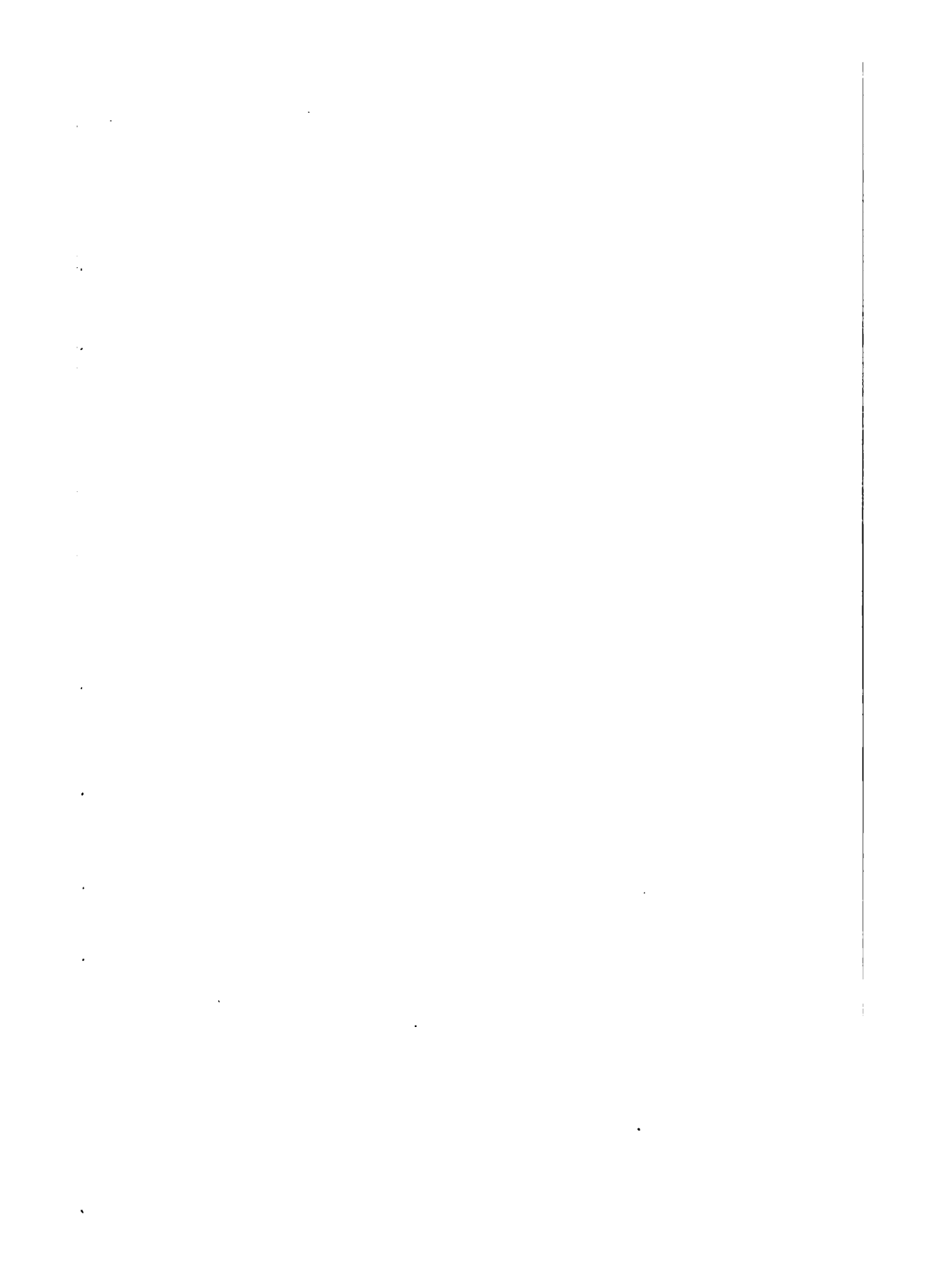
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TO
MY PUPILS



PREFACE

I HAD intended writing a complete Treatise on Horsemanship, which would have covered all questions, and most of the details, of this important subject. But two circumstances caused me to change my mind, and decided me to write, instead, a very small and elementary book. Here are those two circumstances:

(1) An extraordinarily intelligent and well-endowed fifteen-year-old girl was brought to me for instruction by her mother. Besides her natural aptitudes, this young lady had been riding on horseback every day, during three consecutive summers, in a regularly organized Girls' Camp. Yet she did not know: (*a*) the first thing about deportment on horseback, and the reasons governing the observance of such deportment; (*b*) she thought there was only one manner of carrying the reins; i.e., all the reins held in the left hand, and was consequently astonished when I told her there were nine; (*c*) she was unaware that the horse canters on the right, as well as on the left foot, leading, and still less did she know that there are reasons for *making* him canter on both feet, alternately; (*d*) but, worst of all, she did not have the slightest idea that, in order to put his horse in motion, it is necessary for the rider to make use of the lower part of his legs! She had only been taught the use of a switch (broken from a tree) or a stick, to be handled in a manner similar to that employed by sightseers in Egypt when beating the donkeys—and

sometimes the donkey boys, which latter generally proves more effective.

(2) I never realized, as I did this year, that pretty little boys and girls whom I had seen beginning to learn to ride ten and twelve years before, at the age of six or eight, had, now that they were budding into young manhood and womanhood, grown so round shouldered that some of them appeared hunchbacked, a most unfavorable condition for the potential forebears of generations yet unborn.

I then resolved to write this very small book, giving simple and elementary truths on Horsemanship, which I therefore thought might better appeal to the general public, so easily satisfied with elementary, primitive things, at least where riding on horseback is concerned.

I have consequently followed in this book the same progression I observe with pupils who want to learn how to ride merely so as to be able to appear in the Park—the summit of Equestrian ambition of most, and wish to look as well as possible on Horseback—With this, in order to combat the erroneous idea that “hands are born but cannot be made,” I have thrown in a little technical knowledge of the handling of the horse’s mouth, and therefore, some practical advice as to the means of improving a rider’s hands, in fact, of actually giving him “good hands.” The reader may reach this most desirable result alone if he studies conscientiously, and has at least some natural ability: if not, he will supply the deficiency with the help of a good teacher, and obtain the same results.

NEW YORK CITY,
October, 1922.

DE SOUZA.

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ELEMENTARY EQUITATION

ELEMENTARY EQUITATION

CHAPTER I

CORRECT POSITION OF THE RIDER

WE must first of all establish what is the correct position of the rider on horseback, and in the next section under the title "The Reasons Why," full and detailed explanations will be given, demonstrating how and why, this, *and only this*, can be the correct position for riding. Prevising this, it must be said: (a) that the Saumur Saddle, evolved (apparently) from the Theurkhauff Saddle (patronized by Baucher, the famous French Equestrian genius, and *initiator of all Modern Scientific Equitation*), is *the best* saddle extant for general purposes (*Fig. 2*); (b) that the saddle must be placed squarely on the horse's back, behind the withers and consequently behind the shoulderblades (this must be so in order that the shoulders have, at all times, complete freedom of movement); (c) that attention must be paid that, especially when the rider is on horseback, a perfectly free space be left between the saddle and the horse's back (*Figs. 3 and 4*), in order that there should not, at any moment, nor under any circumstances, be any friction between the saddle and the horse's spinal column. (Such friction often develops bruises and sores, which, when not properly attended to, entail very serious consequences, apart from inflicting suffering on the horse,

a condition which falls under the category of "Cruelty to Animals.") As the details of the Correct Position will be set forth, numerals will be used, referring to the explanations on the different points which will be given in the following section of this chapter.

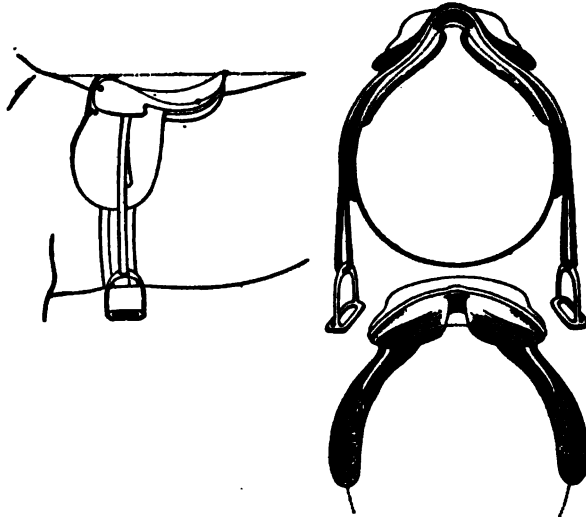


FIG. 2.

FIG. 3.

FIG. 4.

2. *Sauter saddle, correctly placed.*

3. *Front view of same, showing free space over horse's back.*

4. *Back view showing free space over horse's back.*

In order then to have the Correct Position the rider must be seated in the middle of the saddle, (1) and *not* on its back part, or "cantle."

The full weight of his torso must bear squarely and equally on each half of his seat, in order that the line of his spinal column correspond with the line of his horse's spinal column. (2) The rider's shoulders must always,

and under all circumstances be on a line parallel with that of the horse's shoulders. He must draw the buttocks well under him (3) and consequently lift the front part of the under-torso as far above the saddle as possible, thus bringing the region neighboring his spine's end in as close contact as possible with the saddle. He will thus have the first of the conditions for a firm yet *easy* seat. This is a good rider's primordial qualification around which gravitate, and from which are derived (most of, if not) all the other qualifications. The rider will carry the torso perfectly erect, with the back describing a perpendicular line from *saddle to space*. His shoulders will thus be thrown backward; the shoulder-blades flattened, and the chest expanded; (4) all this must be maintained together with the greatest possible suppleness and muscular flexibility; (5) and consequently the straightness of his torso must *not* be the result of, nor accompanied by, the *slightest vestige of stiffness*. This is the second condition for a firm and easy seat.

Seen from the side, the rider's thigh must describe a *slightly* oblique line from the hip to the knee. (6) Looked at from the front (or from behind), the lower part of his legs, from just under the knee to the soles of the feet, must hang perpendicularly to the ground.

(7) Looked at from the side, the lower part of the rider's leg must describe a *perpendicular, dropped from the knee to the tip of the toe*, (8) and under all circumstances the heel must be carried lower than the toes, or, rather, lower than the whole front of the foot. This constitutes the third condition for the required easy firmness of the seat.

The arms must hang perpendicularly along the rider's sides, but must be as supple as possible; and the elbows must, without the least effort, be in practically constant

and easy touch with the hip bones; (9) the hands must be carried quite naturally, without affectation, or constraint, close to each other; (10) a few inches in front of the waistline, and a few inches above the saddle, which will practically place them on an easy level with the elbow; (11) the forearm and the arm must consequently form a rather obtuse angle. Both hands must be used, (12) each facing the other in such wise that the two thumbs and second knuckles touch each other easily, and the hands must be held somewhat as if each of them were carrying a candle; consequently the thumbs uppermost and the little fingers lowest; and so the whole hand, looked at from the side, must practically describe a perpendicular but not sharply perpendicular line, (13) the wrists must be nicely, yet quite unaffectedly, rounded, and the whole hand and forearm must have the greatest suppleness and relaxation, (14) because without these qualifications a rider cannot have good hands, (15) which is one of the most essential conditions for correct riding.

THE REASONS WHY

The reasons why the Saumur saddle is the best are that: (1) its seat having a well marked dip (curve) enables the rider to sit correctly, *a.* in its center; *b.* with the buttocks drawn well under him; (2) its flaps being nearly perpendicular help him carry the legs in the right position, because of not forcing them forward as do saddles with flaps that slant forward; (3) its stirrups hanging a little more back than stirrups in other saddles enable the correct and prompt use of the legs.

In order that the rider be the more firmly seated, it is advisable that the saddle be rather narrow across its center (corresponding with the region over the stirrup

leathers), so that the rider may "sink in," as much as possible, to the saddle's seat, which must be roomy enough to encompass the rider's two buttocks, but not more; a space of about two fingers' breadth must be free behind the rider, as otherwise he would run the risk of hurting, more or less, the end of his spine, by hitting it against the saddle's extreme back edge, which may prove a serious matter.

1st: The rider must be seated in the middle of the saddle, and not on its back part, or "candle."

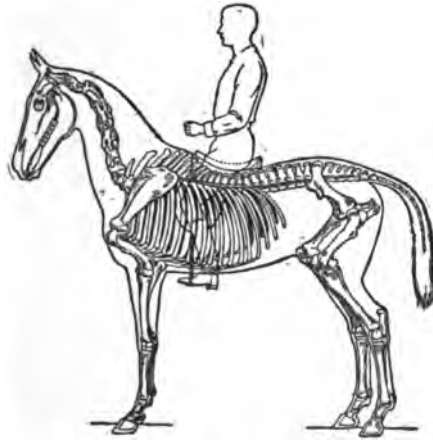


FIG. 5.

Rider correctly placed in relation to horse's dorsal bony anatomy.

(1) There are several reasons why the rider should sit in the center of the saddle rather than on its cantle. But, as this is a very elementary work, I will give only one of such reasons, in fact, the first of them.

The horse's spinal column is the most voluminous and of the strongest build at a point immediately behind the withers to a point slightly more than half-way between them and the line of the haunches. Besides this, his deepest and strongest ribs being in this region, where moreover their bases are united to the breastbone, add strength to precisely this part of his backbone. (*Fig. 5.*)

It is then absolutely logical that the rider's weight



FIG. 6.

Rider incorrectly placed in relation to horse's dorsal bony anatomy.

should be brought to bear on the part of the animal's anatomy most able to carry it, and not at some point where its back is weaker. (*Fig. 6.*) (That is why it is somewhat difficult to find horses whose backs are long enough, and yet, *especially*, strong enough, to carry a 180-pound or 200-pound lady riding side-saddle, because the side-saddle being longer than the cross saddle causes the rider's weight to bear farther back on the horse's back, however well-built and well balanced that saddle

CORRECT POSITION OF THE RIDER 7

may be, which then of course, improves things, but to a certain extent only.

2nd: The full weight of the rider's torso must bear squarely on each half of his seat; his shoulders must always, and under all circumstances, be on a line parallel with that of his horse's shoulders; the line of his spinal column must correspond with the line of the horse's spinal column.

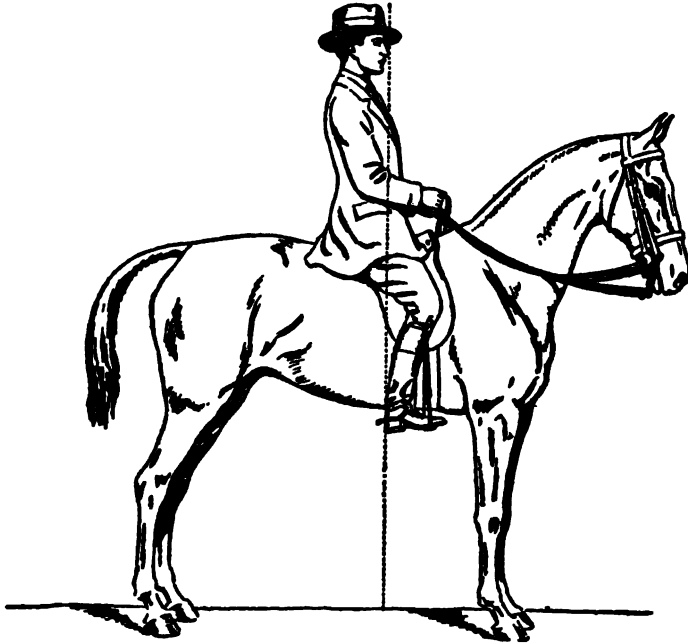


FIG. 7.

Rider in correct position.

(2) Besides other reasons which do not come under the modest scope of this work, there are two, one concerning the rider, the other the horse, for which it is necessary that the weight of the rider's torso fall squarely and equally on each half of his seat and that the



FIG. 8.

Rider in correct position, his shoulders parallel with the horse's.



FIG. 9.

Rider in correct position, line of his spine coinciding with the horse's.

line of his spinal column coincide with the line of his mount's spinal column. (*Figs. 8 and 9.*)

When the rider does not sit thus squarely, some of his

muscles overdevelop to the detriment of others, whose control he thus loses to that extent.

When the rider does not ride thus squarely, the saddle bearing ever on, and being constantly pushed to, one side, has a tendency to eventually bruise the horse on that side, besides making it more difficult and more disagreeable for the horse to carry a badly balanced weight. Anybody can ascertain this by carrying a badly balanced, and then a well balanced pack—or vice versa—on the shoulders.

3rd. The rider must draw the buttocks well under him, and consequently lift the front part of his under-torso as much as possible, thus bringing the region neighboring the spine's end in as close contact as possible with the saddle.

(3) There are only two elementary, but nevertheless important reasons for which the rider should (practically constantly) draw the buttocks well under him, and elevate the front part of the under-torso. (*Fig. 10.*) The first is that by doing so he will very much more easily and gracefully straighten the back. The second is that he will thus protect to that extent the front part of his under-torso from the irritation and other possible—though not always probable—injuries due to constant friction. (In the case of ladies riding astride, this position avoids the possibility of friction, the consequences of which, aside from the usually remote one of local injury, might be very detrimental to their health.) (*Fig. 11.*)

4th: He must carry the torso perfectly erect, with his back describing a perpendicular from saddle to space. The shoulders will thus be thrown backward, the shoulder blades flattened, and the chest expanded.

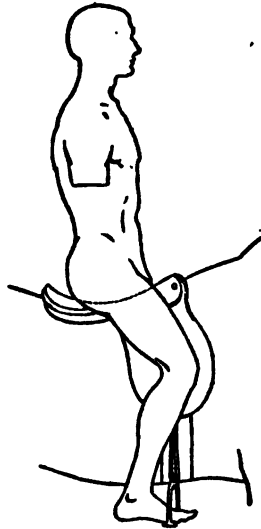


FIG. 10.

Proper basis of under-torso when rider's position is correct.

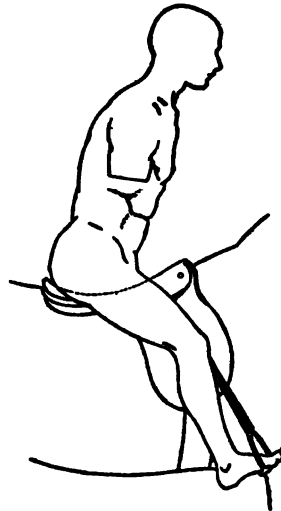


FIG. 11.

Improper basis of under-torso. Round-shoulderedness and crumpling of abdominal muscles when rider's position is incorrect.

(4) The ethical reason for a person riding on horse-back with an erect torso although important would not

be *so* important if it were the only one. Because, although it is more agreeable to see a person on horseback look like a human being rather than like a monkey, this would be unimportant if other reasons of a far more serious order did not give sound and valuable ground for a "human" deportment on horseback.

By the incorrect or careless carriage of the shoulders, muscular development follows at a place where it should not occur, *viz.*, the top of the shoulders; and it is at that point where the awful round-shoulderedness, unfortunately visible in too many among the younger generation of American riders, starts its disfiguring work. (*Fig. 11.*)

One of the first results of this round-shoulderedness is the proportionate diminishing in the strength of the dorsal and lumbar muscles so necessary not only for Correct Riding—which alone would be an item of secondary importance—but for all the uses of life, and among girls, for the proper development of their bodies as potential mothers.

Furthermore: by the improper carriage of the torso the sternum presses on the gastric and abdominal regions in a way which does not take place when the torso is carried erect. (*Fig. 12.*) And it is conceivable that a continuous pressure on the gastric and abdominal regions (stomach and bowels), especially when kept up during a more or less violent exercise, cannot possibly be beneficial to these organs, the proper functioning of which is so essential to good health. (In confirmation of this, I may state the example of two persons who used to ride with bent backs and who both suffered from poor digestion, one though only about thirty-two, the other about forty-eight years of age; and of three others, who all rode with erect torso, and who never knew what indigestion was,

although they were much older and lived pretty high—to put it mildly . . .)

In fact, I have never known a horseman who rode with torso erect to complain of any digestive-organ



FIG. 12.

Proper relation of thoracic cage to stomach and abdomen; also greater possibility for lung gymnastic and therefore increased breathing power when rider carries torso correctly.



FIG. 13.

Improper relation of thoracic cage to stomach and abdomen; also greater difficulty for lung gymnastic and therefore diminished breathing power when rider carries the torso incorrectly.

trouble, excepting after ptomaine-poisoning, appendicitis, or cancerous diseases, from which troubles people suffer without ever having been on a horse.

But it is logical that several hours, or even one hour

of daily bumping from the thoracic cage-bones, owing to extraordinary or even to the usual movements of the horse, cannot be conducive to the good health, and proper functioning of the rider's stomach and bowels. (*Fig. 13.*)

As a result of improper carriage of the torso, the pectoral muscles do not develop as they should, and, while this is an important question for the male rider, it is not nearly so important as it is to the female rider, and especially to the young female rider, whose bust when not properly carried—even apart from riding—does not properly develop.

But, while the reasons already advanced in favor of the proper carriage of the torso are important, there is yet another reason which is quite as important as, if not still more important than these.

When we are performing any exercise, but perhaps especially when we are riding on horseback, our respiratory organs work more, by reason of the necessity of increased inhalation and exhalation. In order to do this completely and satisfactorily, the lungs must be able to contract, but especially to *expand* to their utmost. *And this can only take place properly when the torso is carried erect and the chest is expanded.* (*Figs. 12 and 13.*)

5th: The correct position of the torso must be maintained together with the greatest possible suppleness and muscular flexibility, consequently the straightness of the torso must not be the result of, nor accompanied by, the slightest vestige of stiffness.

(5) Anything that is stiff, hard, and unpliant, is heavy; and that selfsame thing suppld, rendered thoroughly pliant and elastic, is immediately lightened.

It is then comprehensible that if any part of the torso—and especially its upper portion, around the shoulders, and shoulder-blades—is in any degree stiff, it will be heavy to the extent of that stiffness.

Comparing then the condition of the rider to that of a ship, which it very much resembles in this respect, we may say that the rider whose torso is stiff, and therefore heavy, is very much in the position of a ship which would be more heavily laden on her deck than in her hold: with the least heavy seas she would be in danger of capsizing through topheaviness; and owing to that same topheaviness, due to stiffness of any part of the torso, the rider would—and often actually does—topple over, especially if he be a novice, in consequence of any slightly abnormal movement his horse may indulge in, through playfulness or for any other reason.

Besides which, as actual weight cannot under the circumstances be subtracted, but can only be shifted from one point of the body to some other, the weight thus eliminated from the torso through suppleness and flexibility, is shifted to the seat, and increasing thereby this part's firmness on the saddle, gives more security to the rider.

A good means for erecting the torso, discovered by my pupil, Mr. B. H. Inness Brown, of New York, is to make an upward traction of the muscles of the whole front of the torso, from its lowest part to the top of the chest, *but without lifting the shoulders*. Once the torso is thus erected to its full extent, relax the muscles completely, but without impairing in any way the erectness of the torso. This exercise also insures the suppleness

of the abdominal muscles, and, to that extent, the proper functioning of the abdominal organs. (*Compare Figs. 12 and 13.*)

In order to enhance to a still greater degree the lightness of the top of the rider's shoulders, the head must be carried high and erect, but without the slightest shadow of stiffness of the neck, especially at its back. Consequently the head and neck must not only be able to rotate, easily and completely, to the right and left, but must also be turned upward or down, at will, without, when doing so, involving in any way the shoulders, nor especially stiffening them.

Many people—especially in America—have the habit, when on horseback, of looking downward, towards their saddle's pommel, or to the ground, or at one of their feet, and then at the other, etc., either through bashfulness, or for any other reason for which they could not give a valid explanation.

Meanwhile the horse keeps going and sometimes, while performing these antics with the head, the rider causes his mount to turn to the right or left, with the result that, if he happens to be riding in a ring in which other people are simultaneously riding, he crashes into some other horse and rider, because of his failing to see them in time; and when two riders having the same habit meet under these conditions, it is quite amusing to the onlooker, but not always to the riders.

When a rider who is in the habit of acting thus does so outdoors, the result may be more painful, to himself, to others, and also to his horse, although the animal then tries to protect himself by a side-jump to avoid the impending collision, sometimes divorcing his rider thereby. As may further be sensed, there is another reason for carrying the head high, which is as important

as, if not, at times even more important than the one of enhancing the torso's flexibility and lightness; and that reason is "Sight."

This point is important because: the higher we carry our head, the more ground in front of our mount do we cover with our eyes (*Fig. 9*), and the farther we can see, especially when going at a fairly good clip. We can thus sooner detect any danger or obstacle that may lie in our path, and have the more time to make up our mind as to how we will keep out of their way, or "negotiate" them, according to circumstances.

6th: Seen from the side the rider's thigh must describe a slightly oblique line from the hip to the knee. Looked at from the front (or from behind), the lower part of his legs, from the knees to the soles of the feet, must hang perpendicularly to the ground.

(6) If the thighs were to be allowed to describe a more horizontal line, the rider's seat instead of being placed in the middle of the saddle as it should (*Fig. 14*), would be thrown on the saddle's hind part or cantle (*Fig. 15*), and we have seen why that should not occur.

With the rider's seat displaced from the center to the cantle of the saddle, the erect position of the torso is next to an impossibility, and we have gone over all the reasons why the torso should be constantly kept erect.

If the stirrups were lengthened so that the line of the thigh be straightened and made one with that of the lower leg, the pivotal point formed by the bend of the

knee would be annulled, and thus the *supple* firmness of the seat rendered impossible. (Fig. 16.)

With the ensuing straightness of the leg the rider would have to depend absolutely on the stirrups for support, and as this support would be found inadequate, excepting after *years* of riding, and many resultant falls, an artificial support would become necessary, which contingency leads directly to the Mexican or Cowboy saddles.

With the establishment of the straight line, the lower



FIG. 15.



FIG. 16.



FIG. 14.

Incorrect leg-position; thigh too horizontal. Incorrect leg-position; thigh too perpendicular. Correct leg-position; thigh oblique.

leg can be used, at best, only as a rough means of urging the horse forward, but cannot be used, as when the thigh is properly placed (describing a slightly oblique line), as an "aid" for the guidance of the horse, in elementary riding; still less can it be used for the complete control of the horse, so necessary in advanced horsemanship (into which, although, of course, quite out of the scope of this book, a little inkling will be given in a subsequent chapter).

To insure easy firmness of the seat it is absolutely

necessary that the greatest possible number of points of contact be established between the saddle and the interior of the rider's thighs, from the sacral region to just below the knees (above the calves). *These points of contact must be established from the moment the rider gets into the saddle, and maintained until the moment he dismounts.*

But, while this adherence *must be constant*, it must *not* be accompanied by the slightest muscular tension, excepting when some untoward movement made by the horse renders it absolutely necessary for the rider to obtain some sort of a grip. And even then, nine times out of ten (excepting if the horse makes really disagreeable movements), it will be found that the forcing downward of the heels, in conjunction with absolute suppleness and flexibility of the torso, and easy closeness of the elbows to the hips, will secure the rider a sufficiently firm seat.

At this stage it can be deemed proper to say that as a rule the greater proportion of the menace of falling off exists in the mind of the rider rather than in reality; and as soon as this fact is realized by the rider a goodly part of the battle is won. Contrary to popular belief, then, *no constant grip must be made with the thighs*, although, as already stated, constant closeness, through the greatest number of points of contact between the thighs and the saddle, must *always* be observed. But while this closeness must be constant it cannot be too strongly emphasized that it must be of the most supple character, the thighs being made to bear on the saddle-flaps with as much lightness as a hand may be rested on a table. (Not as if that hand wanted to crush something on the table.)

The reasons for this thigh-suppleness are manifold. Here are some of them:

If a constant pressure were used when unnecessary,

the thighs would undergo a strain, which would promptly tire them so that, just when it might be necessary for them to make an extra effort, in consequence of some untoward movement of the horse, it would be impossible for them to make it, and the rider would be consequently that much nearer to falling off. Besides which, constant stiffness of the thighs produces in some people who ride much the disease called "rider's thigh," which consists in ossification of the adductor muscle of the thigh. (I have seen it on a professional English rider.)

The constant stiffness of the thigh induces, by proximity, the stiffness of the other parts of the body, and especially of the torso, thus destroying suppleness, ease, and elegance of riding, not to mention correctness of position.

The constant stiffness of the thighs obtains, as one of its first ill consequences, the stiffness of the lower legs. Thereby the development of delicate action of the "aids" (as the lower legs are called when working thus) is prevented, although being so absolutely necessary, especially in advanced riding.

As a result of constant gripping of the rider's legs (thighs or knees) many horses—especially the high strung and nervous ones—become more or less restive, and the reason of this restiveness is not only comprehensible, but can be easily brought home to anyone who wishes to experiment on himself what the effect must be on the horse. This experiment can be easily effected by having a friend walk behind one, holding one's back either in a vise-like grip, or by a soft pressure of the arms (or hands).

In view of the necessity of the most numerous points of contact being always maintained with the saddle, as already mentioned, it must be borne in mind

that, unless they have started their equestrian career very early in life—say in early childhood—people, of both sexes, whose thighs are rounded are less apt to have as firm a seat on horseback as those whose thighs are flat. That is why ladies whose forms are feminine and rounded, and whose limbs are rounded too, will always find it difficult to learn riding astride; and if they insist on riding so, they will only be able to ride very dull and uninteresting horses.

They will ride side-saddle very much better, more gracefully, and with much greater safety and elegance; they will moreover then be able to ride livelier and more interesting horses; and they will also be able to do far more interesting and intelligent things, that is, if they want to delve to any extent into Scientific Equitation. Because of these reasons, ladies should not ride either astride or side-saddle in accordance with fashion, fad, or fancy, or because "everybody else does so," which is a peculiar way of asserting one's personality and freedom of will. They ought then to choose one way or the other, only because of their individual conformation being better adapted to riding either astride, or side-saddle, as the case may be. In fact, ladies who, by reason of their conformation, can ride astride well, should nevertheless learn to ride side-saddle also.

It is now time to destroy a misconceived or misunderstood idea of how to "hold on" on horseback, which is generally said to be "by the knees."

The "hold," *when necessary*, must *not* be effected by the knees, *as such*, but by the knees *as the ending point of the thighs, and in conjunction with them*, the pressure then beginning at the sacral region, or starting simultaneously at all points of the interior of the thighs, from that region down to and *including the knees*, to a point just

below them and just above the calves. The reason for this will be easily sensed by the following little experiment: The rider being on horseback will effect a grip with the knees only. He will then feel that the more the knees tighten, the more the thighs open at the seat, and consequently the less adherence has this part of his anatomy with the saddle. Moreover he will then find it difficult to maintain the torso erect. Reversing the manner of gripping and doing it in the correct way,—that is, by tightening the limbs all along the interior of the thighs, from their topmost point down to and including the knees,—he will find not only that he will obtain more adherence by increasing the number of points of contact of the thighs with the saddle, but that he will also be able to maintain an erect torso which, *if properly flexed*, will continue to be supple notwithstanding the momentary stiffening of the thighs. If, in conjunction with that, the rider will keep the heels unyieldingly low, he will have still easier and firmer adherence to the saddle, than is generally believed obtainable by such a simple process.*

A very easy experiment will prove this last contention. The rider sitting lightly on the saddle and making no effort whatever with the legs will have a third party push one of his heels upward. He will immediately feel how this very little difference in the position of the heel will have considerably diminished the adherence of that thigh with the saddle.

Then the third party will force that same heel as low down as possible, and the rider will immediately feel how

*In exceptional cases, mostly defences out of the scope of "Elementary Riding," the grip by the knees alone is not only permissible but advisable. In those cases the correctness of the rider's position goes by the board momentarily, as for example when he has to crouch on the horse's rearing.

much closer will be that thigh's adherence to the saddle, and how much firmer will consequently be that side of his body on the saddle, without more ado than the pulling down of this heel.

7th: Looked at from the side the lower part of the rider's leg must describe a perpendicular dropped from the knee to the tip of the toes.

(7) The lower part of the legs being used *only* for the purpose of urging the horse and guiding him, in conjunction with the hands—as will be explained later—

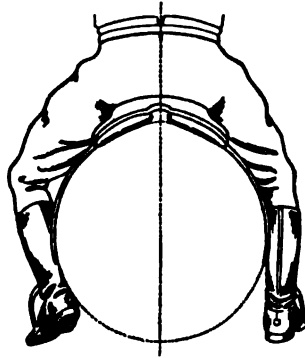


FIG. 17.

Composite back-view of rider's legs "gripping"; left leg incorrect—grip by the calf and heel that excites the horse and produces the open knee, and that impairs the rider's seat; right leg gripping correctly.

they must at no time, and under no circumstances whatsoever, be used as a means of holding on to the animal. (Fig. 17.) If used to hold on, they might, in fact in-

variably do, produce negative results because, exciting the horse by their pressure, he moves still more undesirably than he may have already been moving, and thus places the rider in a far more precarious situation than the one in which he may have been before.

A further reason for the suppleness and relaxation of the legs as a means of firmness in the saddle is the following: If we hold the fingers stiffly, we absolutely cannot grasp anything we want. (And anybody who has suffered from rheumatism in the fingers can testify to this.) But a person whose fingers are perfectly limber and relaxed can grasp, release, and re-grasp, with rapidity proportionate to his nervous organism, anything desired, with the only difference that the phlegmatic person will do it more slowly, and the nervous person more quickly. Consequently the more supple and relaxed the thighs and legs are (*not floppy and wobbly*), the quicker and more easily will they be able to "grip," according to the rider's temperament.

But any temperamental shortcoming can be corrected, to a greater or lesser extent, by proper exercises and intelligent practice, as explained in subsequent chapters.

8th: Under all circumstances the heel must be carried lower than the toes, or rather, lower than the whole front of the foot.

(8) In order that the rider's legs have that firm flexibility, or flexible firmness, enabling him to easily, and most of the time unconsciously, follow the horse's motions, and yet have a hold on his mount's back secure enough to guarantee him against being jolted off by any

of his movements, it is necessary that the thigh and lower leg describe between each other a slightly obtuse angle. (*Fig. 14.*) If this gentle angularity did not exist, the rider would not be able to resist the horse's slightest movement while simultaneously maintaining a correct and graceful position on horseback. (*Fig. 7.*)

Therefore we see that people who ride with very short, or very long, stirrups, and who thus either make the angle too sharp, or destroy it completely by having a perpendicular leg-line, cannot sit to the trot easily and flexibly, if at all, the ability to do which is a test of correct horsemanship.

Those who ride with short stirrups are bound to ride incorrectly and ungracefully, that is to say: on the cantle of their saddles and with backs doubled-up, which makes them look more like monkeys than human beings, besides provoking other unhealthy conditions for themselves and their horses, as already explained. They hold on because the tightness of their footing in the stirrup keeps them strapped, as it were, on their mount, and because their lack of elevation above the saddle, in consequence of their forward stoop, affords them combined, a semblance of balance.

Nevertheless, excepting in rare cases where persons have been riding with short stirrups continuously for many years, their security on horseback is precarious, and more of these fall off than are willing to admit.

Those who ride with the perpendicular leg-line can only ride, with any security, as already said, on specially built saddles—Mexican or Cowboy—which hold them on “*nolens, volens*”; and when the horse gets particularly obstreperous, their grip comes from sticking their spurs in the animal's girths, or even in his sides, whereby they secure themselves until the poor beast is exhausted. But,

until re-taught, they are incapable of riding any other sort of saddle. And they also prefer the "lope" to any other gait—the most destructive gait of any, and one so easy that an untrained child can sit it. All that is not horsemanship, let alone "Correct Riding." By the observance, then, of this slightly obtuse angle in the line of the leg, the rider establishes for himself a reliable means of diminishing harsh, angular, or stiff reactions to the horse's movements, which he will feel all the less, in direct proportion (a) that the firmness of his thigh-hold will be more elastic; (b) that he will keep the heels lower than the toes; (c) that his torso will be flexible; and (d) that he will maintain a cool head; each one of these four conditions being as important as any of the other three.

In order that the obtuseness of this angle be slight, it is necessary that the lower leg describe a perpendicular dropped *from the knee to the tip of the toe*. (Figs. 7. and 14.)

The American Army rule is (or was) that the perpendicular line be from the knee to the ball of the foot; and the English manner of carrying the lower leg is that the perpendicular line be from the knee to the heel. Both are wrong for reasons which are going to be enumerated, but the second of them is the least desirable of the two.

With the perpendicular line from the knee to the ball of the foot the angle created by the thigh and the lower leg is made less sharp; and we have already seen why this should not be. With the perpendicular line from the knee to the heel the angle is practically wiped out, or at least made so obtuse as to mar to a great extent the leg's, and consequently the whole rider's flexibility, which, as we have seen, is a most desirable quality, and consequently one not to be impaired. (Fig. 16.)

But, besides these drawbacks, there is still another which makes both those lower-leg lines undesirable, the second of the two again more so than the first; and although this drawback would be better appreciated by people going in for a more advanced degree of riding than this elementary book explains, yet it is proper that a hint, at least, should be given about it here.

In a slightly more advanced stage of riding than this book describes, the lower-legs—then already beginning to deserve the name of “aids”—cooperate with the hands in the guidance of the horse. In still more advanced riding, and in its supreme form called “High Equitation,” the aids gain more and more importance in the guidance and control of the horse, and are used: not only to urge him forward—which is absolutely elementary—and to determine his gaits, but to make him turn; to shape and modify the movements of his limbs (and to a certain extent of his head and neck); to stop him; and to make him move backwards, at the walk, the trot, and even the canter.

All these results are obtained, neither by arbitrary strength or violence, nor by arbitrary lightness of leg-touch, but by their judicious, delicate, and tactful use, according to the degree of the horse's training, of his natural energy, and the degree of sensitiveness he displays at any infinitesimal fraction of a second.

Thus the rider's leg-modulations must be very similar in technique to the good pianist's hand-modulations, when passing from pianissimo to fortissimo, and vice versa, through all the various degrees of lightness, strength, delicacy, suspension, etc., according to the indications laid down by the composer, or those that he (the executant) may consider necessary for the proper rendition of a musical number.

In order then that the lower-legs be able to display that degree of delicacy, or anything approaching it, with the instantaneity which is required in the majority of cases, it is necessary that they be carried in such wise as not to surprise the animal by their least disordinateness of movement. They must also be carried in such wise that their actions be easily determined and regulated by the rider, without his experiencing the slightest delay, the slightest difficulty, nor especially the slightest shadow of a difference in his seat, in his position on horseback, nor in the absolute flexibility of all the other parts of his anatomy.

This seemingly complex array of lower-leg conditions will be found correspondingly simplified until they reach the vanishing point, in proportion as the rider will learn to use them with increasing delicacy, tact, and appropriateness.

But, in order that they be able to fulfill these conditions, it is necessary that the lower-legs be carried in the prescribed position, which is called the "position at rest," not because the horse is immovable, but because the lower-legs when in this position are not in working order. From this position backward come innumerable "working" positions of the lower-leg. The number of these is determined—very much as in the case of violin playing—by the length of the rider's limb, but especially by the extent of his leg (and thigh) flexibility, and by the delicacy of his tact in determining the hairbreadth differences in the points of contact of the horse's sides by his legs, at which his mount responds the best.

In order then that he be able to fulfill these conditions it is first necessary that the rider learn to use the lower-legs—alternately—without in any way involving the thighs in the operation. This at first will seem difficult,

but with a little practice, and the observance of the following, will soon become daily easier.

For the movement of the lower-leg to become dissociated from the thigh to that extent it is absolutely necessary that the knee-joint act like a very well-oiled pivot; and, consequently, while at its interior side it is constantly firmly, though elastically, kept close to the saddle, on its exterior side it is so rotary as to permit the per-

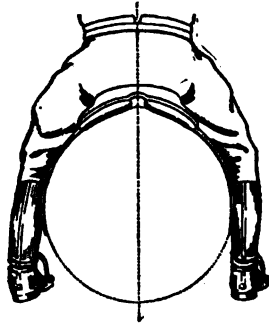


FIG. 18.

Composite back-view of rider's legs at rest; left leg carried incorrectly with awkward twist at ankle-joint through old-style carriage of "toes in"; right leg carried correctly.

fectly easy, cotton-like movement of the lower-leg backward. By this means the non-intervention of the muscles of the thigh is automatically insured.

Formerly great stress was laid on having the rider's toes pointed toward the horse's elbows, and his heels turned slightly outward, because, as the knowledge of the delicate action of the "aids" (legs) had not been realized as it has been by and since Baucher, and as the spurs generally used were very severe, it was then advis-

able not to apply them except in extreme circumstances. The result of this affected and unnatural position, very nearly impossible if not completely so for certain leg-conformations, was a very ugly-looking and awkward twist at the ankle-joint, the exterior side of which poked outward. (*Fig. 18.*)

In consequence of this the lower-leg was stiffened, the knee-joint had less rotary mobility, and the rider's thigh had to develop more grip in its forward part than aft, that is than toward the rider's seat, where, as we have seen, it ought to be employed. (We also have seen why this should be.)

Later on, with the development of the knowledge Baucher generated, it was recommended that the foot be carried on a line parallel with the horse's body. This was later still more liberalized, and practically left to the rider's choice; not to his caprice, fad, or fancy, but to suit the conformation of his leg, and also to suit the conformation of the horse's side, the bulk of whose body is an important item in the matter.

Three pivotal points must exist in the leg in order that it should have the firmly flexible, or flexibly firm hold, so necessary for correct riding, and for the assurance of a secure seat on horseback.

The first and most important pivotal point is, as we have seen, at the knee, the second and third, of equal importance each with the other, are, respectively, at the ankle-joint, and at the waist-line.

The ankle-joint pivotal-point, though small in radius, has a double play; one secures the upward and downward movement of the toe and heel; the other the turning of the toe outward, whenever necessary, but especially when the leg is pushed backward. (In this, of course, the knee-joint cooperates.)

The hip-joint, or waist-line, pivotal-point is common both to the legs and to the torso, and when properly developed—by intelligent exercises which will be described later—assures the unconscious swaying of the torso backward and forward—in jumping or polo-playing—and the facility of turning it to the right and left, without, of course, impairing in the least the security of the rider's seat in the saddle.

A thorough knowledge of the proper use of the legs is not of absolute necessity to the person interested only in "Elementary Riding," such as is the case with the great majority of outdoor riders. But it will be found of growing necessity in "Manège (ring) Riding," and especially in the more advanced "Art" of "High Equitation," misnamed "fancy riding" in countries where people are unaware that "Science" or "Art" is in any way connected with "riding on horseback."

This knowledge will be found exceedingly useful in Polo playing, in which, at present, only the hands are used—and oftener than not in a revoltingly brutal manner, while if Polo were "ridden" correctly, Polo-players would use the legs in conjunction with the hands, and sometimes the legs alone, according to circumstances, and thus they would *not* damage their horse's mouth, as too often occurs nowadays.

The knowledge of the proper use of the legs will also be found most beneficial in jumping, to keep the horse straight to the jump; to bring his hocks well under him, in going at the jump, just prior to "taking off," and thus give him more energy and elasticity at the moment he most requires them.

And so it will be seen that the knowledge of the proper use of the legs has more practical sides than the rider who is ignorant of this knowledge had imagined.

9th: The arms must hang perpendicularly along the rider's sides, but must be as supple as possible; and the elbows must, without the least effort, be in practically constant and easy touch with the hip-bones.

(9) Strange as it may seem, the position of the arm, the manner in which it is carried, and the whereabouts of the elbow, have an important bearing on the quality of the rider's seat, as well as on the quality of his "hands," by which is meant the tact and delicacy with which the rider handles and governs the horse's mouth. The first one of these propositions will be demonstrated now, the other later.

Considering that, as already mentioned, topheaviness is dangerous, and consequently as undesirable in a rider as in a ship, the weight of the superstructure in both—ship and rider—must be subordinated as much as possible to that of their lower parts.

As, by reason of conformation, the weight of man's superstructure is greater than that of his nether limbs, and as his topheaviness on horseback is logically consequential to these conditions, he has to counter-balance this disparity by using the legs in such a manner as to give them, artificially, a greater weight than they naturally have; and he must further counteract topheaviness, by identifying himself as much as possible with his mount, a result which he obtains by increased closeness of contact with the saddle.

He also diminishes topheaviness by artificially increasing the lightness of his superstructure—the torso—through constantly keeping it flexible; and by thus add-

ing to the weight of his seat increases his firmness in the saddle; he can further increase the firmness of his seat by keeping the arms lightly, not stiffly, close to the



FIG. 19.

Back-view of elbows poked out, and one (the right) pulled simultaneously up. Notice bad effects on shoulders, seat, etc. Compare with Fig. 8, and with others further along in the book.)



FIG. 20.

Elbows poked back. Notice bad effects on torso, seat, legs, etc., also danger of being hit in the face by horse's head. (Compare with Fig. 7 and with others further along in the book.)

sides, and the elbows in constant, if easy, touch with the hip-bones.

Because if the elbows were allowed to poke outward, they would inevitably lift, as a result of the horse's least

untoward movements, and the rider's shoulders rising inevitably together with them, his sides would lift also. (*Fig. 19.*) His seat would then, of necessity, follow suit, and all this would diminish to that extent the firmness of his hold in the saddle, and of course increase, to that same extent, his proneness to fall off.

If the elbows were allowed to go backward—especially if back of the line of his back—they would immediately displace the rider's shoulders forward, compel him to push the seat backward, to pull the thigh, the knees, and the heels, upward, with all the disadvantages, and ultimately, the fatal consequences, to the firmness of his seat and of his hold on the horse, which, as we have already seen, these conditions would necessarily entail. (*Fig. 20.*)

The rider desirous of ascertaining the truth of the foregoing statements will only to have to make a trial of those two incorrect arm positions to be convinced of their reality; and he ought to try the latter at the trot!

When the rider will have become an expert, able to keep a firm seat on horseback under practically all circumstances, it will, of course, be permissible for him to do with his arms whatever he may please. In this respect, when polo-playing, he will be able to use them just as necessity offers, for the purpose of swinging the mallet to the right or left, over the head, backward, or in any way at all. But, until a rider *has* become an expert, it is not advisable for him to attempt polo-playing or any other similar game, because, far from being beneficial to him, as they would be if practised when he would have become an expert, they will be absolutely detrimental to his good progress in the Art of Equitation. (This advice also applies to Jumping and Hunting.)

To return to the position of arms and elbows: When the rider shall have demonstrated to his own satisfaction that by stretching the elbows sideways or by pulling them backward he impairs the firmness of his seat on the saddle, and consequently decreases his hold on the horse's back, he will find that by bringing the elbows to bear firmly on the hip-bones, to what extent he can—but without stiffly flattening the arms against the sides—he will push the seat *downward* and proportionately increase his firmness in the saddle.

When he will be able to do this promptly, easily, and lightly, under all circumstances, he will, in case of necessity, that is to say, in case of a sudden and unexpected untoward movement from his horse, be able to increase the security of his seat by the simple process of forcing the elbows to the hip-bones, and will be able to strengthen it in the saddle in direct proportion with the promptness, ease, and lightness with which he will do so. In order then that this pushing down of the elbows be effective at the stages when it is the most required, the three principal of which are: (1) when the rider wants to stop his mount; (2) when the horse kicks; (3) when he buckjumps, it is necessary that the hands be carried slightly higher up than is generally the case, for reasons which will be explained later on.

It will thus be understood that the elbow is an important pivotal point in the upper part of the rider's body, and must always be considered as such, not only in the interest of the rider's correct position, but especially in the interest of his security on horseback. The arms, from the shoulders downward, must be kept close to the rider's sides, but as has already been pointed out, without the least suggestion of stiffness or force, because the slightest of these shortcomings would provoke, by prox-

imity, the stiffness and consequent topheaviness of the top of the shoulders and subsequently of the torso, conditions which, as we have seen, are fatal.

10th: The hands must be carried quite naturally, without affectation, or constraint, close to each other, a few inches in front of the waistline, and a few inches above the saddle, which will practically place them on an easy level with the elbow.

(10) Certain riding-teachers, professional-riders, and others, while often not doing so themselves, impress upon others the advisability—in fact, as it were, the absolute necessity—of carrying the hands as low as possible. This is usually incorrect for the various reasons hereafter described, excepting under certain conditions, most of which but one, do not enter in the scope of this book. This one condition will be found in the chapter entitled “Sundry Advice to Riders.” In order to carry the hands low a rider has to lower the shoulders, consequently to bend the back. His torso thus cannot be erect, and his seat being thereby sent backward on the saddle, his legs cannot be carried in the prescribed position; in a word: he is not only out of gear, but his firmness of seat is impaired for reasons which have all been explained. (*Fig. 21.*)

But the point which interests us the most at this juncture is that, by carrying the hands low they become of necessity separated from each other, sometimes by the full extent of the horse's withers, and are thus prevented from being able to quickly shorten or lengthen the reins. And while an expert-rider (which a person

who studies only this book will never be), will not require the use of the reins to any extent worth mentioning on account of being able to guide and control his mount by the more or less exclusive use of the legs, excepting when riding a green, an untrained, or a vicious horse, the average rider will always, and almost continually,



FIG. 21.

Hands carried too low. Notice ill effects on shoulders, arms, etc. (Compare with Fig. 7 and with others further along in this book.)

require to shorten or lengthen the reins, notwithstanding the care he may take not to allow them to slip through his fingers.

This necessity is consequential to the horse's changing his equilibrium not only according to his gaits, but also according to his moods. In the walk (the slow, and the

long), in the trot (the slow, and the fast)—in the canter, and in the gallop, the horse carries the head and neck differently, lengthens, foreshortens, lifts, or lowers, both of these parts of his anatomy, which especially in the case of inexperienced riders—such as the usual run of riders are—compels the nearly constant changing of the length of the reins.

When the horse is gay, or dull, or gets excited, or frightened, as the case may be, he also changes, sometimes quite abruptly, not only the carriage of head and neck, but also that of body and legs, and it is consequently under these circumstances that it is so necessary for the average rider—and at intervals, even for the expert—to be able to change the length of the reins nimbly and easily.

With the hands separated from each other, at times by the withers, it ought to be comprehensible that the quick and easy changing of the length of the reins is a practical impossibility. And it will therefore also be comprehensible that this impossibility may, at a given moment, be a question of grave concern to the rider, because of his more or less loss of control over his mount, were it only momentary. (It sometimes takes but the fraction of a second to unseat a rider.)

11th: The forearm and the arm must consequently form a rather obtuse angle.

(11) The practical reason for carrying the hands on a (easy) level with the elbows—by which is meant not strictly on a level with the elbows, but at *about* that level—is that thus they are practically half-way between

"low" and "high," and can therefore be quickly changed to either of the two extremes, together or separately, according to circumstances which may offer.

The hands must also be carried at a few inches from the waist line, because—except in the case of an expert rider—if they were carried closer to the body the rider would sometimes be at a loss to lengthen and shorten the reins quickly; or otherwise his hands interfering with his torso, he would, at a given moment, be compelled to poke the elbows outward, and thus lose his balance, as has already been explained. (*Fig. 7.*)

12th: Both hands must be used facing each other in such wise that the two thumbs touch each other easily, and the hands must be held somewhat as if they were carrying candles: consequently the thumbs uppermost and the little fingers lowest; and so, looked at from the side, the hand must describe a perpendicular, but not sharply perpendicular, line.

(12) *Both hands must be used.* There is a wrong impression created in America by the sight of military riders, and by their imitators, that the correct—in fact the only—manner of carrying the reins, is with one hand only, and that hand only the left. *This is absolutely wrong.*

When the cavalryman is carrying in the hand or making use of side-arms (sabre or lance), it is absolutely necessary for him to guide and control his horse with the left hand only. But he ought to be taught—as he is in the European Armies, at least in the Continental European Armies—to use both hands, until both, getting

equally well educated, he may, in case of emergency, be able to use either of them with equal facility; or if he be wounded in the left hand or arm, he may be able to guide and govern his horse equally well with the right hand.

The civilian, who has not the side-arms' reason for riding with only one hand, has consequently not the shadow of an excuse for maintaining his right hand uneducated—outside of the Biblical reason for not allowing one's right hand to know what the left hand is doing—and ought then to use mostly, if not constantly, both hands. Added to the drawback, great as it is, of the right hand remaining uneducated, there is another drawback consequent to using the left hand only which is no less serious than that one, if even it is not more important, inasmuch as it affects not only the rider but also the horse, and affects the horse in two different ways.

Riding constantly with the left hand only, even an expert rider—unless he pays constant attention to his position and keeps everlastingly correcting it, even after knowing how to ride very well—will inevitably ride one-sided, that is: with the left side and the left leg forward, and the right hip and right leg drawn in. (*Fig. 22.*) The logical result of this will be that both horse and rider will become one-sided, to the detriment of the rider's other side, and extraordinary as it may seem to the layman, to the eventual premature using-up of the horse's left front leg. Here is the reason why: The constant pushing of the right half of the rider's weight, and the resulting constant closer contact of his right leg with his mount's flank, have a tendency to throw, not only his weight, but also that of his horse to the left, thereby compelling the horse to display more energy with his left side, and to throw more weight on his left front leg than he otherwise

would. After a certain period, governed by the horse's conformation and other conditions, this inequality of distribution in his and his rider's weight begins to tell, and the heavier pounding of his left foot, especially if the



FIG. 22.

Rider habitually using left hand only. Notice twisted torso and seat, incorrect distribution of weight, and unbalancing of horse.

roads he usually travels over are hard, causes blemishes of a more or less serious nature to appear on his left front leg sooner than on the others. If the "lope" is the rider's favorite gait, then the ruin of his left front leg—on which the horse thus ridden lopes most frequently, if

not invariably—occurs sooner, and is usually followed by the premature ruin of his right hind leg also, because, as will be explained further in this book in the chapter relating to cantering—the limb that gives the impulsion to this gait (the lope), is the hind-leg diagonal to the one with which the lope (or the canter) leads. But there is yet another and more immediate harm which usually occurs to the horse in consequence of his rider's riding one-sided, which is the following:

As a result of the continuous pushing of the rider's weight to one side, the saddle inevitably rubs the horse's back harder on that side, thus causing bruises and sores which do not appear on his other side. These can take very long to cure, and can also cause long-standing injury—even after being exteriorly cured—conditions that never occur if the rider's weight is well divided on the horse's back; unless, of course, the saddle's padding not being well attended to, presses unevenly on the animal's back, eventually bruising it, on the side where the greater pressure occurs.

13th: The wrists must be nicely, yet quite unaffectedly rounded, and the whole hand and forearm must have the greatest suppleness and relaxation.

(13) Many riders have the habit of carrying the hands with finger-tips downward. While this hand-position is perfect for piano-playing, it is absolutely inadvisable for horseback-riding, and here are the reasons why:

With the downward nail-position, however close the hands may be carried together—in fact as close as touching each other by the thumbs—the fingers that require to be closest for the purpose of the handling of the reins, (*i.e.*, for the purpose of lengthening and shortening them, etc.), consequently the third and little fingers are the farthest apart. These are the fingers that hold the

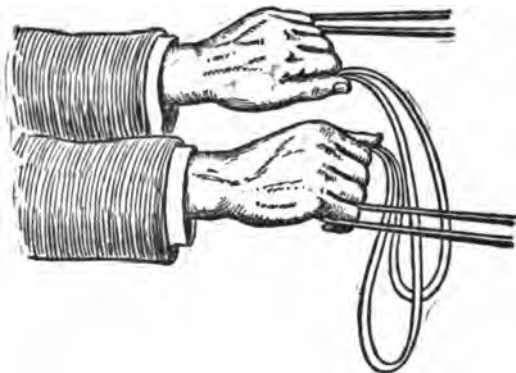


FIG. 23.

Incorrect carriage of hands, nails downward; demonstrating how, when thus carried, the two sets of reins are far from each other and can, moreover, slip off the fingers.

reins in the English position; and a very simple experiment will show that with the downward nail position they are really as far apart as the width of both hands, and that consequently the rider will find as much difficulty in manipulating the reins as if the hands were actually carried that far apart from each other. (*Fig. 23.*) We have already seen why this is utterly inadvisable.

But, besides this drawback—bad as it is—this incorrect

carriage of the rider's hands offers another drawback quite as bad, if not at times, possibly worse.

For, when the rider who carries the hands thus wants to stop his horse—especially if going fast—or has to use the reins quickly in order to control some sudden untoward movement of his mount—he is bound to push the elbows backward (*Fig. 20*), back of the line of his back—with, as we have seen, the inevitable consequence of pushing the seat backward on the saddle, bending the

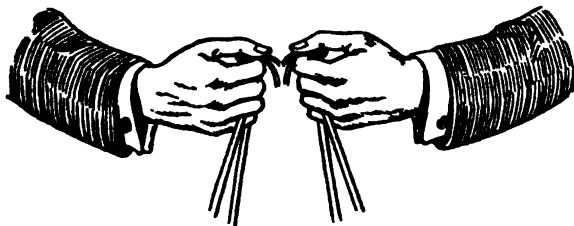


FIG. 24.

Correct carriage of hands, second knuckles facing each other, thumbs topmost, little fingers lowest, reins easily manipulated because the two sets are close to each other. (Compare with Fig. 23.) Notice graceful bend at wrist.

shoulders forward, lifting the knees and heels, and in fact doing exactly all that he ought not to do.

Thus the rider has the closeness of his seat to the saddle decreased and the firmness of his hold on the horse proportionately diminished, precisely at the moment he most requires the perfection of these qualities, in order not to run the risk of being unseated, and eventually, perhaps, of falling off the horse.

Moreover: as in order to handle the horse's mouth properly, and consequently with the necessary delicacy

and promptness, the fingers have to enjoy full freedom of action, the downward nail-position is absolutely wrong because, when the hands are so carried the fingers cannot be freely used without the reins dropping out from between them.

With the correct position of hands (*Fig. 24*), the fingers can, if necessary, be kept moving constantly (and nimbly) without the rein slipping through them, provided, of course, that *however much they move, the thumb and forefinger of each hand always keep a firm and unyielding hold on the reins—an absolute necessity which must never be neglected.*

14th: Without this suppleness and relaxation a rider cannot have good hands.

(14) There is another reason for carrying the hands in the prescribed position rather than with nails downward, which, being linked with the carriage of the wrists, and having a bearing on the quality of the rider's handling of the horse's mouth, is of primary importance in his whole riding. This reason is that only by carrying the hands in the prescribed position can the wrists be rounded; consequently, only with this position can the hands have the suppleness and flexibility so absolutely necessary for the skillful—by which is meant prompt, delicate, yet very distinct—manner of handling the horse's mouth, or hand-technique.

The flexibility of the wrists is an absolutely necessary factor for the turning of the rider's hands, either upward and consequently backward, or downward and consequently forward, because without this flexibility the

hands can be turned neither as completely nor as quickly as when it is present, and therefore hand-technique cannot be developed. These hand movements must at times be executed with such dexterity and quickness—according to a horse's sensitiveness and sprightliness—that it is no exaggeration to say that, exactly like when countering by thirds and fourths in fencing with foils—if a person were to practice wrist-flexibility regularly and steadily during fifty consecutive years, he would still find room for improvement. This comes to pass because: while at times these rotary movements of the wrists have to be executed, as stated above, with almost lightning-like rapidity—especially when one is riding a sharp and high-strung horse, like most (good) thoroughbreds, so many three-quarter breds, and a few high-class, although cold-blooded, horses, are—they must *never* have a jerky quality, but must, on the contrary, always impart a feeling of smoothness and suppleness to the horse's mouth, while developing the same qualities in the rider's wrists, and forearms, and even in his arms. Quickness joined to smoothness in hand motion being a very rare combination, even among ladies, it will be realized how very necessary is the executing of these movements as exercises with the hands (and consequently with the wrists and forearms) so as to perfect hand-technique by the development of the suppleness and flexibility of one's upper limbs. It is therefore advisable for those who have thick wrists, a heavy bony formation, and strong muscles, and who are therefore less apt to possess the so-highly required hand-flexibility, delicacy of touch, etc., to practise these exercises (movements) apart from the time they are riding. To that effect, at any leisure moment—when smoking a cigar at their club, or riding around in their conveyance—they ought to carry the hands (first

one and then the other) in the position prescribed for riding on horseback, and move them as directed, first slowly, and then faster, paying attention that when they do so, and in consequence of doing so, they increase at each time the suppleness and flexibility of the parts thus exercised.

This is emphasized because, if these same exercises are executed with stiffness of the parts—hands, wrists, etc.,—instead of developing their flexibility, they will tend to make them more rigid, and consequently negative the scope for which they are prescribed.

Now: as the hands must at times be *intelligently* light and delicate, while at other times they must be able to deploy harshness and severity (when needed), and must yet display none of those requisites arbitrarily, it is absolutely necessary that they should be in a condition to quickly and effectively appreciate the requirements of the horse's mouth. The sense of touch of the rider's hands, that special touch which will allow him to realize what is going on in the horse's mouth, and therefore what has to be done to it, having to be developed, it is obvious that he should do what is necessary to obtain that development. (The knowledge of what is going on inside the horse's mouth, and of the working of the bit and snaffle, for the animal's regulation, and for his consequent control by the rider, will be elementarily explained in the part of this book treating of flexions.)

Meanwhile, as comprehensible, the sense of touch being sharper, and more analytical, in those whose hands, wrists, and forearms, are light and supple, than in those not so well endowed, it will be the business of the riders who wish to develop these qualities to the utmost in their own limbs to follow the foregoing advice to the best of their power and ability.

15th: The possession of good hands is one of the most essential conditions for correct riding.

(15) A false idea is current, and has universally existed until Baucher began to dispel it, that "hands are born and not made." Although it is certain that some people are born better gifted than others for the Art of Equitation quite as well as it occurs for music, painting, sculpture, and so forth, still, it being possible to improve the quality of all riders' hands as fully as may on the average be necessary for ordinary—and even for advanced—riding, it is foolish to say that hands are "born" but cannot be "made."

Just as some students of the aforementioned arts will sooner or later become masters, while others will continue in obscurity—sometimes although possessing the qualities of great masters (which in such cases is recognized in them after their passing to another planet, and then always for the pecuniary advantage of people unable themselves to do anything in those lines), so in Horsemanship some become great riders, and others do not get out of the good average, notwithstanding their earnest desire and the capacity of their teachers. But in Horsemanship these cases are so few and far between, that they can practically be considered abnormalities.

The rules for disposing of one's own arm forces are so clear—as I hope to have shown them—and the rules for recognizing the necessities of the horse's mouth are also so definite—as I also hope to demonstrate, elementarily in this book, and more completely in following books—that it is practically impossible for anybody, intelligent, studious, desirous of learning, and not morbidly in-

capacitated, not to have good hands, which is, undoubtedly, the principal requisite for riding correctly on horseback.

The ability of "sticking on" to a horse's back under all circumstances is certainly a great advantage, but the art of knowing how to use one's hands—and legs—with intelligence, delicacy, and appropriateness is even more important, because of its diminishing by fifty per cent at least the necessity that is generally thought *absolute* for "sticking on."

Everybody has known, or heard of, refractory horses who have proved so unmanageable by male riders considered experts, that they have even at times parted company from these experts more or less violently, yet which, when ridden by some young girl, or young woman, have suddenly become quite amenable, and docile.

The whole question in such cases has been that the so-called "expert" male riders, deserved that distinction only in consequence of the public's average ignorance of the fact that expertness does not consist only in the ability to "stick on," and because of this ability to irritate the horse and render him unmanageable through uselessly rough, or perhaps even brutal, handling, but that real expertness in such cases rested, as it always rests, on the side of tact and delicacy, which women, as a rule, and only a few men, possess as natural gifts.

And as assuredly more such horses exist that would offer numerous examples of the same sort, but for the fact that young ladies are usually prevented by their male relatives—and rightly so—from "taking chances," we can say that the proposition: "knowledge of mouth-ing is more important than the mere faculty of sticking on," is not exaggerated.

And as there are also, apart from these rather extreme

cases, innumerable examples of horses being very much quieter with some young girls than with their brother or father, although he be a far better rider than they, the contention is still further proved, that "good hands" (by which is meant also "educated hands") are a prime factor for Correct Riding.

While a Professional Rider has, of practically absolute necessity, to be more or less of a "sticker on," a gentleman-rider, that is, one who rides solely for pleasure or health, has only to try to develop this aptitude "as far as in him lies," for his own protection, and for the protection of the people he may chance to run across in his roamings on horseback.

Therefore: just as no "gentleman"—and still more no "lady"—will, or ought to, associate in daily life with people of disreputable character, and degraded morals, except in doing missionary work, so, no such refined person should associate with any vicious, disreputable or roguish horse, excepting for the purpose of studying Training, and should do so then only under the supervision and guidance of a careful and experienced teacher.

Consequently, a lady or a gentleman must associate *only* with well-educated horses, or at least with animals of such good breeding as are amenable to kind, intelligent and gentle handling, and consequently not requiring that their riders be "stickers-on" to any marked extent.

CHAPTER II

THE SIDE-SADDLE

Instead of having a dipped (curved) seat such as the cross saddle, the side-saddle's seat must be absolutely flat from end to end; and when placed on a horse's back it should show a slight antero-posterior slant upward, rather than the contrary; in other words the side-saddle should tilt slightly forward rather than back. (*Fig. 25.*)

In order that the rider be able to sit on it squarely, without effort, it is advisable that it be re-enforced, if not even very slightly raised, all along its left side. This should be so because the left side of the side-saddle constantly bearing a greater proportion of the rider's weight than does the right, on account of the lady's limbs hanging over it, is liable to give way sooner in consequence of this continuous over-pressure from above.

Eventually, then, if not re-enforced or raised, it inevitably slants a little leftward, and once this has taken place, it is difficult and unpleasant for a lady to keep her balance on it, because of constantly feeling herself slipping off over her mount's left flank.

The width of the side-saddle must be such as to encompass easily the whole of the rider's seat, none of which ought consequently to overlap any of its sides, but should not be wider; and its "belly" ought to be so smoothly shaped as not to be a source of discomfort to the rider's left thigh.

There must be as much vacant space behind the rider's spine, at the end of the side-saddle's seat, as there is in the gentleman's saddle, and for the same reason.

The top pommel, and the lower one, also called "leaping-horn," may be more or less high or broad, to suit the size of the lady's limbs, or her convenience.

The right-flap of some recently built side-saddles is

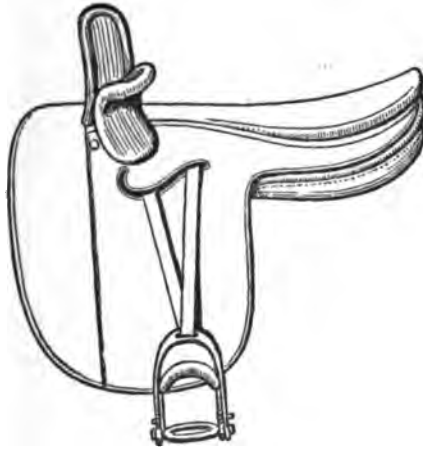


FIG. 25.
Side-saddle.

very small—in fact just big enough to cover the girth-buckles. (*Fig. 26.*) Besides being very stylish, this presents the immense advantage of enabling the lady-rider to tighten her horse's girths from on horseback without the assistance of a third party, when, as very often occurs during a ride, they grow loose. Moreover this small flap allows of the whip being used with greater ease, and consequently with the possi-

bility of greater delicacy, on account of the rider being always aware of enjoying the facility to apply this "aid" as, and when she requires, and exactly on the spot she wants, a composite certainty which she rarely feels, especially while a novice, when riding an old-style, voluminous right-flap side-saddle.

The leaping-horn is usually placed too high up along the left flap to be of any practical use in emergencies without impairing the rider's deportment, and weakening her position on horseback, because when such emergencies offer, as in jumping for example, and the rider wants to secure herself by its means, she is bound to lift the left knee. By so doing she obtains the very incorrect and ungraceful results demonstrated by illustration No. 27.

To obviate against this a leather contraption of elongated quadrangular form has been placed on some saddle-flaps, its slightly prominent lower edge supposedly preventing the exaggerated lift of the left leg by pressing on the edge of the lady's boot, and thereby forcing that limb to remain relatively low.

While this result has always seemed to me rather mythical, especially at the moment it is most desired (*i.e.*, when jumping or in difficulty), the presence of this contraption has usually appeared to be rather disturbing and awkward in ordinary circumstances (as for example when rising to the trot), by reason of its interfering with the leg, or catching at the top of the rider's boot, unless all measurements—of saddle, stirrup-leather, and boot—dovetailed so exactly as never to interfere with each other, and that, therefore, the contraption never acted as a "catch," except in the precise circumstances for which it was intended to function that way!

But a more horsemanlike and a far superior means of



Photo by Haas.

FIG. 26.—MRS. CHAS. ALLAIRE ON ONE OF HER PRIZE-WINNING SHOW-HORSES.

Demonstrating correct side-saddle riding; also correct dress for evening riding, show, music and (in Europe) park,—small-flap side-saddle, sensible length of riding-coat; horse collected, consequently with the movement forward, as proved by the position of his legs "at support."

avoiding that incorrect leg-carriage has been attained by a new and logical disposition of the leaping horn devised by that well-known and intelligent horsewoman, Mrs. Herbert Wadsworth of Avon, New York, which being placed much lower down and a little more back than is the rule, absolutely prevents the lifting of the knee even



FIG. 27.

Lady's left leg incorrectly hugging the leaping horse, showing ungraceful and even dangerous effect of this bad habit on her position and seat.

if the rider were to instinctively do it though knowing it to be wrong.

Although somewhat similar saddles have been in use, apparently, by lady High School riders of Central Europe—especially by the late Misses Eliza Petzols, and Loysset, by Madam Renz, as also by her late Majesty,

the Empress Elizabeth of Austria, who was an excellent High School rider—the credit of her invention must be conceded to Mrs. Wadsworth because of her being unaware of the existence of such saddles. (*Fig. 28.*)

SIDE-SADDLE RIDING

For some years ladies have taken to riding astride as well as side-saddle, and at a given moment discussion ran pretty high as to the merits and demerits of both ways, from the aspects of grace, elegance, security, womanliness, and health, the partisans of each style generalizing rather than looking at the question from the individual standpoints.

That the side-saddle is more womanlike is undeniable; but then a real woman being feminine even when in overalls and jumpers, as we have had innumerable opportunities to see during the unfortunate World War, she can *a fortiori*, be exquisite whether riding astride or side-saddle.

For the same reason she can be elegant riding either way, or both, as nowadays many ladies are prone to learn to ride astride as well as side-saddle.

She nevertheless cannot very well be elegant without being graceful, and she cannot be graceful unless and until, whether riding one saddle or the other, she learns, like the male rider, to control sectionally, and consequently to supple, separately, at her will, and with ease, each muscle, or group of muscles, she requires to use in order to have her horse do the particular things she may want him to, walk, trot, canter, jump, turn, or execute High School "airs."

The enemies of the side-saddle have claimed that its use is unhealthy because of its supposed tendency to



FIG. 28.—PERFECTION IN JUMPING.

Mrs. Herbert Wadsworth of Avon, N. Y., on one of her jumpers; showing correct position (compare with Fig. 27) resulting from not lifting the knee to hug the leaping horse. Horse in full collection and therefore under perfect control, calm and with complete mouth-freedom. (His movement-forward is obvious.)

overdevelop certain muscles to the detriment of others, and to injure delicate interior organs because of the crookedness of abdominal and lower abdominal regions.

Although these unwelcome consequences may take place when a lady is badly taught, and therefore wrongly placed, if she is taught to ride correctly on the side-saddle, according to the rules set down in this book, she will never have to suffer, whether from incorrect muscular development or anything else.

And the thousands, not to say millions, of women who have ridden, and still ride side-saddles, who enjoy perfect health, have beautiful forms and are prolific mothers, offer sufficient proofs of the harmlessness of side-saddle riding.

The question of security the controversy raises requires greater detail, as it has to be considered from different angles.

If by "security" is meant the difficulty to fall off, the side-saddle offers greater guarantees for sticking-on to the *average* woman than the cross-saddle.

The word *average* is emphasized because most women having rounded forms cannot, as already explained, obtain as many points of contact with the cross-saddle through the interior side of the thighs as can a flat-limbed individual—whether man or woman—and therefore cannot ride well, difficult, strong-gaited, and equestrianly interesting horses on cross-saddles, unless they began riding astride in childhood and kept it up all their lives without any interruption worth mentioning.

If on the other hand by "security" is meant the avoidance of injury in case of accidents, it would seem that in the event of a horse falling, or rearing, a lady riding astride ought to be in a better position to part with her mount at short notice than the one on a side saddle,

although some side-saddle riders claim they could, at a pinch, do it also very quickly.

But in the actual fall, whether on the left flank, the knees, or back (through rearing) the injuries from the side-saddle are mostly graver, especially in the last of those ways (rearing). Therefore a rearer, or a weak-legged horse ought never to be given a side-saddle rider.

To counteract these unfortunate occurrences there are on the market safety stirrups, and safety stirrup-leather-attachments and hangers, which allow of the rider's foot being released instantaneously from the stirrup, or of the leg separating easily from the saddle, or of both contingencies, which greatly diminish this danger.

Just as in the cross-saddle, the stirrup ought to be wide enough to allow of the foot getting into it comfortably, but not so big as to permit the whole foot, heel included, to be thrust through it in consequence of the horse's unruly movements, as the result of this unwelcome and unwholesome condition might be very disagreeable—to say the least.

(Some side-saddles are built for use on the horse's right side. These are advisable—of course—for ladies whose right nether limb being incapacitated through congenital or accidental troubles, cannot use it as easily as necessary to hold on to the pommel. They are also used on alternate days that an ordinary left-side saddle is ridden, by ladies who do not ride cross-saddle, and desire to have a means, other than the whip, to keep their mount going "straight," a difficulty which so few know how to properly overcome, precisely because of not knowing how to handle the whip with tact and delicacy.)

The position of two-thirds of the body of the lady riding side-saddle is identical to that of the male rider.

For example: her torso must be placed as squarely

on the saddle as the man's (*Fig. 29*), with the slight difference that she must have a tendency—especially when

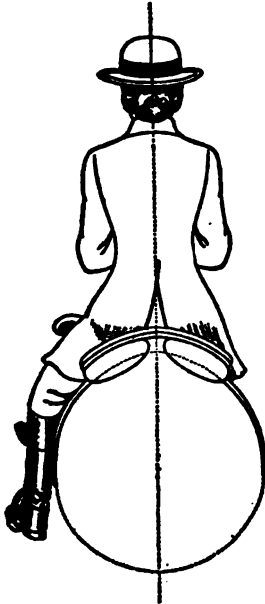


FIG. 29.

Lady side-saddle rider correctly placed—torso, arms, left leg carried like the man's, line of her spine coinciding also with the horse's spine. (Compare with Fig. 8.)

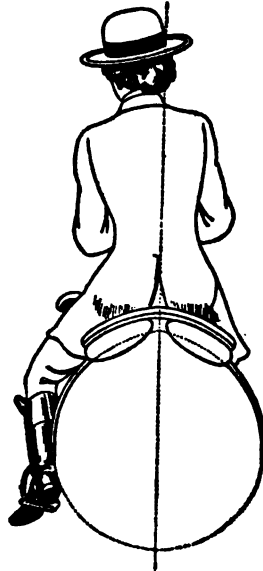


FIG. 30.

Lady side-saddle rider advancing and lifting her right shoulder, and therefore causing her spinal column to fall out of the line of her horse's. So as to hug the leaping horse, she lifts the leg, opens the knee, lowers the toe and kicks her mount with the heel; and by the combination of these actions she lifts the right half of her seat from the saddle.

making the horse turn to the left—of leaning a tiny bit more on the *right hip-bone* than the male rider—not on

the right half of the seat, because then she would lift the left half, but on the hip-bone. (Practice will soon make her realize how much she must lean.) She must also be careful, when in difficulty with the horse, or when jumping, not to allow her right shoulder to get out of line and go forward, but to keep it strictly "where it belongs," that is: squarely on a level with the left shoulder, if not even a shadow of a line behind it. This recommendation is offered because the correct position of the right shoulder is one of the three guarantees the lady-rider has for staying on horseback in these, or other equally difficult circumstances.

The next of these "guarantees" is that she keep her left leg in exactly the same position as the male-rider keeps his, length of stirrup, lowness of heel, etc., and that she maintain the parallelism of the left foot with the horse's side to the best of her power and ability, or, in other words, as far as the conformation, roundness, and other conditions of her limb will permit her to do so.

Many ladies have the habit of lifting the left knee until it bears under the leaping-horn, either when they are in difficulty with the horse, or when jumping. Some have even been advised to do so! *This is absolutely incorrect*, because when doing so they inevitably lift the whole leg out of position, with the same undesirable consequence that occurs to the male rider, to-wit: that of loosening the thigh from off the saddle, thereby decreasing to that extent the closeness of their contact with the saddle, and therefore impairing proportionately the firmness of their seat on the horse. (*Fig. 30.*)

Besides which, especially if the lady wears a spur, she will involuntarily, but inevitably, touch the horse's side with it, and, exciting him thereby, simply make matters worse for herself.

When jumping, this inadvisable action of the left leg has the further disadvantage of pushing the horse to the right, and of making him jump out of gear, unbalanced, and crooked, consequently, not as a horse ought to jump in order to jump well. As a result, the rider has that much more difficulty in sitting on him, which she can overcome, to some extent only, by getting out of position, riding incorrectly and, at least momentarily looking like a



FIG. 31.

*Lady side-saddle rider's legs
correctly placed.*



FIG. 32.

*Lady side-saddle rider's legs
incorrectly placed.*

tossed-about bundle of clothes instead of a woman.
(*Fig. 27.*)

So, while keeping the left heel low at all times (*Fig. 31*), whether when using the leg or not—exactly like the male-rider—the lady riding side-saddle must pay special attention to keep it *low* when in difficulty with the horse, or when jumping. She must consequently *not* try to lift the left knee under the so-called “leaping horn,” which ought to be abolished because of its utter uselessness.
(*Fig. 32.*)

The last, but by no means least, “guarantee” for the

lady's security when riding side-saddle, is the position of her right leg, and the quality of its hold around the pommel.

The lady's right thigh must be placed flat on its whole length on the saddle, in such manner that the right knee *just* embraces the pommel. The right leg's calf must go well around that part of the saddle; but, while the contact of the bend of the knee with the pommel of the saddle must be as close as, and similar to, a hook and crook (in some parts of a lady's dress), the grip resulting thereby must be neither stiff nor convulsive, nor still less must it be constant.

If these undesirable conditions were to be allowed, they would inevitably bring about the stiffening and consequent topheaviness of at least part of the lady's torso, as inadvisable in her case as in the male-rider's, and inadvisable for precisely the same reasons.

Besides which, those undesirable conditions would inevitably—and especially in a long ride—provoke such leg-stiffness, fatigue, and possibly even cramps, that, when she would require to use this leg in order to hold on, her control of it would be lost, through lack of strength. And she might thus be that much closer to the weakening of her firmness on the saddle, and even, perhaps, to falling off.

The lady's right leg must be carried in such manner then, that a perpendicular may be dropped, according to its conformation, approximately, from the middle of its knee to the middle of its foot. (*Fig. 31.*)

It must also be carried in such manner as to allow her to hug the pommel, or loosen her grip of it, with the greatest possible rapidity, these actions, of course, never influencing any other part of her person.

Some ladies being able to effect this better by keeping

the toes down, others by keeping the toes higher than the heel, or at least on the same level—it is largely left to the lady to carry the right foot as best suits her leg-conformation. But it must be said that the best way for the lady to carry this foot is—when possible—with the toes down. With this foot position less bulk is created in the front part of the lady's saddle, and the look of it is thus neater, daintier and more elegant. (*Compare Figs. 31 and 32.*)

CHAPTER III

MOUNTING AND DISMOUNTING

MOUNTING CROSS-SADDLE

Many a rider mounts a horse without paying attention as to whether his girths are tight enough, his bridle well put on, the stirrups properly arranged, or the reins are adjusted in his hands and when the horse is held he sometimes even omits taking them.

All this is absolutely incorrect because, by reason of this neglect they have to lose much time, once on horse-back, in readjustments of all sorts. And thus: while as a rule the horse is then aimlessly moving around, they are more or less helpless on his back, and consequently more or less at his disposal, even if they have somebody to hold him—obviously, very much more so, if no one is at his head.

Instead of which, if the necessary precautions had been taken, as soon as the rider gets into the saddle, he is automatically ready for practically anything the horse may do; a condition that may some day prove of inestimable value.

If one has good and reliable stablemen—grooms, etc.—the inspection of saddle, bridle, girths, etc., is, or may be, superfluous. But, if on account of such superfluity we do not contract the habit of going, even perfunctorily, through this inspection, however useless it may, time and again, have proved to be, we will not learn to do it

instinctively. And so, perhaps the very day we will require it the most we will fail to do it, and have cause to regret this omission ever after.

Therefore, before getting on horseback, the rider must first see that the bridle is well placed, that the curb-chain is properly adjusted, and is at the proper length, and especially, that the girths be correctly tightened.

In order that the bridle be properly placed on the horse's head, it is necessary that none of its leathers—nor reins—be twisted, as the twisting of the leathers

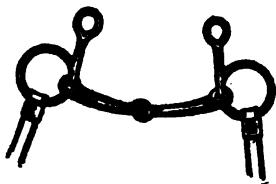


FIG. 33.
Baucher snaffle.

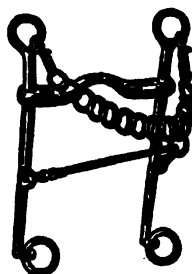


FIG. 33a.
Baucher curb-bit.

which rest about his face and head, bother and irritate the horse and prevent the irons in his mouth from being at their proper places; and the twisting of the reins render their hold clumsy and disagreeable to the rider's hands.

A saddle-horse should be ridden with a full-bridle, consisting of bit (also called curb) and snaffle, the first of which ought never to be severe, and both ought to be of the Baucher pattern. (*Figs. 33 and 33a.*)

The bit—or curb—therefore ought *not* to be of the "pump" or movable mouthpiece sort, as all similar con-

trivances destroy the decisiveness of action of the rider's hands, because in order to obtain this negative result the horse has only to play with the mouthpiece, making it go up and down by a very simple movement of the tongue, and the trick is turned.

The Baucher snaffle is better than the ordinary ring snaffle, because it cannot possibly get into the horse's mouth, as often occurs with the ring-snaffle in consequence of any side-pull the horse may make, or the rider may have to make, the "uprights" that exist in the Baucher snaffle (above the ring) laying on the horse's cheeks in such manner as to prevent most effectively this occurrence. (This then only takes place if the Baucher snaffle is allowed to hang too loose down in the mouth.)

Consequently the snaffle must be placed in the top of the horse's mouth—back of the line of the curb—and its leathers must be measured in such manner that it bear *lightly* on the corner of the lips, so that only an "appeal" from the rider's hands through the snaffle-reins will pull these (the lips) more or less upward.

The curb must lie lower, at about the width of a finger and a half or two fingers' distance from the snaffle, and precisely in a little groove provided to that effect by the jawbone, which groove can be detected by the touch of a finger in the horse's mouth (especially when the curb is not there). In order that it be well adjusted the curb-chain must lie *flat*, from end to end, on the lower part of the back of the horse's face, *just above the chin*; and its degree of tightness must be determined by the possibility of passing two fingers, more or less slantwise, between it and the horse's lower jaw; in other words it must be just loose enough, or tight enough, not to be able to pass under the horse's chin.

(Some horses are a little more hard mouthed than others, and consequently require a little tighter curb-chain; but when they are ridden during some days in the manner hereinafter prescribed they become sufficiently light-mouthed to have their curb-chain loosened by one link or even two.)

The next thing to do is the inspection of the saddle, which consists of seeing that it is properly placed on the horse's back—as prescribed earlier in this book—that its girths are tight, but not exaggeratedly tight, as in this case they interfere with the horse's breathing, and may cause a high-strung animal—especially if a colt—to resent being ridden upon, when so tightly girthed, and to defend himself either by kicking, bucking, or rearing just as soon as the rider attempts to put his foot in the stirrup and mount him.

The rider must see to it that the tightening of the girths has not caused a crumpling-up, or frowning, of the skin about the horse's sides, and under him, as a continuance of this condition in a long ride, or a repetition of it in several rides, may—in fact invariably does—cause blistering and sores, which are not only disagreeable to the eye, and painful to the horse, but often put him out of commission for a more or less lengthy period.

The way to avoid this then is for the rider to pass the flat—or even the back—of the fingers up and down, along the sides of the horse and underneath the girths, in order to flatten out the skin and prevent its “crimping.”

(An incentive to girth sores are cloth girths, which, if not kept *very* clean, harden so on the edges that they become quite cutting, and then bruise the horse's skin. A good sort of girth is the leather girth which can be kept clean very much more easily by the simple process

of sponging out with cold water after each ride—which takes about two minutes—instead of the thorough laundering which the cloth-girths necessarily require.)

The rider must also see to it that the process of tightening the girths, which is usually done from only one side—the girths being generally left at the same “point” on the other side of the saddle—has not pulled the saddle all to one side, as this would necessarily cause inequality in the stirrup-lengths, whatever precautions he might have taken to the contrary. The tightening of the girths must then be executed from each side alternately, in order that both sides’ buckles be practically on the same level.

These investigations will at first seem lengthy and tedious to the rider, but after a little practice he will find: that a side glance will suffice for him to see whether the bridle is “on” right; that two fingers passed hastily at the curb-chain will suffice for him to ascertain whether the curb-chain is tight enough or loose enough; that two fingers of the right hand hastily passed about the girths will be sufficient to accomplish the necessary inspection; and that just a little pushing right and left of the saddle will stabilize it, all of these operations taking up not more than two minutes of his time, at the very outside.

We must surmise that the horse is to be held by a groom; but as nowadays, when apparently anybody at all can be a groom, so many grooms do not even know how to hold a horse properly for a person to mount, it is advisable that something be said as to how this ought to be done.

There are two ways of holding a horse, according to various conditions the animal especially—but also the rider—may present. One way is that the groom stand

in front of the horse (*Fig. 34*), holding him by the snaffle-reins—the right rein in his left hand, the left rein in his right—at a couple of inches' distance from the animal's cheeks, so as to maintain his head at a height suiting his requirements. For example: if the horse has a tendency to jump up on the hind legs, then the reins must be held by the groom in such manner as to keep his head a little lower than he would with any other horse. And

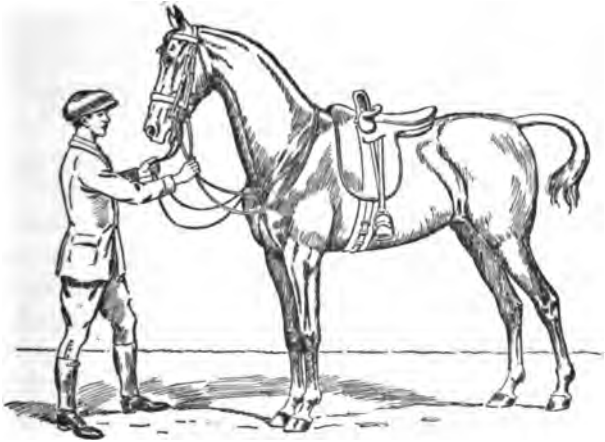


FIG. 34.

Groom holding horse from in front. Notice bracing of his feet, opposing horse's left-side motion by means of the reins.

in case the horse attempts to jump up again notwithstanding this precaution, he must be ready to act with the reins in such a way that the top of the horse's bridle press on the top of his head, and that his head consequently be kept down as much as possible by the double means of the snaffle tension and of the pressure of the top of the bridle. This manner of holding the horse should not be attempted if the animal is head-shy, as often are the un-

fortunates that have been beaten on the head by brutal or drunken stablemen.

Such horses, when insistentlly held onto thus, throw themselves backward violently—in French “tirent au renard”—and are thus apt to cause a very damaging accident. It is then best to hold such horses in the manner next described, or even not to hold them at all.



FIG. 35.

Groom holding horse from off-side.

Anyhow such horses are usually not fit mounts for learners.

The other, and most usual way to hold a horse, is for the groom to stand beside him, at his right (also called “off”) side, passing the *right* hand *under* the horse’s curb-rein, and holding the snaffle-reins with the thumb on the right snaffle-rein, its forefinger between the snaffle-reins, and its other fingers around them. (This hand must seize the snaffle-reins from underneath them.) (*Fig. 35.*) With this manner of holding a horse the groom will

better be able to lift his head—if necessary—by the simple process of lifting the rein-hand (the right hand) until its first finger's second knuckle gets in contact with the animal's jawbones, just above the curb-chain.

But *in no case must the groom make any action with the reins*, until: either the rider tells him to, or the horse moves. In either of these cases, nevertheless, the groom must use the hand with the utmost delicacy, therefore only to the extent of influencing such part of the horse as may get out of position—for example: to prevent or correct the move of a foot, etc.—but *never to the extent of throwing the horse back on his hocks*. This throwing back on the hocks must be especially avoided because: while a slight forward movement of the horse will be merely disagreeable, and then only to a certain extent, to a nervous rider, or to an utter novice, a horse's backward movement effected just at the moment he is going to be mounted, will be far more uncomfortable for the rider; it may moreover have other still more unpleasant consequences, in the shape of making the horse slip with one hind-foot, or even of exciting him to rear, if the action of the groom's hands is too sudden, or too rough.

While the groom's right hand is thus employed, his left hand must hold the top of the right stirrup, together with its attached stirrup-leather, and put the stirrup to the rider's foot, instantaneously upon its reaching the stirrup's level. The stirrup must be given to the rider by its *exterior* side, and consequently when taking hold of it the groom must give it a twist toward himself, so that its *interior* side be facing forward toward the horse's head.

It is important that the stirrups be carried in this way: the rider's foot—either of them, therefore both—

entering the stirrups from their *exterior* side, and what was their *interior* side be consequently facing forward.

With this twist given the stirrup, the stirrup-leather lies flat against the rider's leg, its *anterior* edge standing outward and its *posterior* edge consequently *inward*, or facing the horse's side.

If the rider's foot were not to take the stirrup thus, and were to get into it through its *interior* side, the stirrup-leather would *not* lie flat against the rider's leg, but presenting its *interior edge*—instead of its *exterior flat side*—to the rider's limb, would, especially in a long ride, eventually hurt the interior of the lower part of his shin-bone, on the whole length of its contact with the stirrup-leather's most twisted part.

Having finished his precautionary inspection, the rider will adjust the length of the stirrups to suit the length of his legs. To that effect, even though someone is holding the horse—still more, of course, if nobody is there to hold the animal—he will, being on the horse's left side, and beginning always by that side, pass the left arm through that same side's reins; hold the stirrup with the right hand, placing its lower part snugly under the left arm-pit; extend the left arm, hands, and fingers, *flat* along the stirrup-leather, and over the buckle, in such way that the tip of his middle finger will reach just over the top of the buckle, under the little flap which covers it near the top of the saddle.

If the stirrup-leather happens to be of exactly this length—that is, of the length of his extended arm, hand, and fingers—nothing will have to be done to it; but if it is longer or shorter than the thus extended arm, hand, and fingers, it will have to be either lengthened, or shortened, to correspond with that length.

This measurement is not always absolutely correct,

in the first place because these same proportions do not always exist between the arms and legs of some individuals.

But this being in most cases the best method of measuring, very little practice will show persons not so proportioned whether they have to take the measurement a little shorter or a little longer than their arm, in order that the stirrups may suit the length of their legs.

Another reason for the finding of a little difference of stirrup-length is the horse's body-conformation; and thus it is that a rider may be able to ride one horse better with one or even two points longer or shorter stirrup-leathers, than he would ride some other horse.

Then again, the build of the saddle is a factor in the difference of stirrup-leather lengths; a flat-flap, straight-flap, saddle with a nice Saumur curve, well fitting to the rider, will allow him to use one, or even, two points longer stirrup-lengths than he will ride in some other saddle.

Having measured the left stirrup, the rider will pass to the horse's right side, and do the same thing, with the difference that, in order to measure the right stirrup's length he will pass the *right* arm in the horse's right reins, but still measure the *right* stirrup with the *left* arm. This done, he will stand in front of the horse and, lowering himself so as to be able to look from the height of the animal's chest, he will try to ascertain visually whether the two stirrups are on the same level.

Because it very often occurs that, owing to some unknown reasons—possibly nothing more than a very slight difference of ground-level—notwithstanding the taking of all these precautions previous to mounting, once the rider is on horseback the stirrups prove to have some trifling inequality, which must be corrected: and still, as

we have seen, such corrections ought not to take place while the rider is on horseback.

When passing from one side of the horse to the other, the rider must always have a hold on one of the horse's reins, unless someone is holding the animal for him. But even when such is the case, during the measuring of the stirrups he must pass the arm in the horse's reins, or else, if he does not contract the habit of doing this, practically instinctively, he will some day omit doing it when nobody is holding his horse, and the animal getting suddenly frivolous, excited, or frightened, by some unexpected noise or occurrence, will bolt away and leave the would-be rider in the lurch.

The stirrups and everything arranged to his satisfaction, the rider will then proceed to get on the horse's back.

(It goes without saying that if a person is the owner of horse and saddle, and there is no chance of anybody else having used the saddle, nor any chance of the stirrup-lengths having been changed, even while being cleaned, it is useless for the rider to go through these tedious measuring practices.)

It is advisable that, as much as possible, the stirrup-leather and stirrups be changed from one side to the other before or after each ride, or whenever they are cleaned.

The reason for this advice is that, on account of riders invariably getting on and off the horse to and from the left side, the full weight of their body carrying always on the same stirrup, eventually makes its leather a trifle longer than the other. This trifle, although appreciated by the rider, cannot possibly be corrected by punching a new hole in the right stirrup-leather, because the slightness of difference prevents an accurate measurement,

except by the widening of a corresponding hole in the right stirrup-leather, which would then weaken it. The stirrup—as already said—must not be so big as to allow the whole of a rider's foot to get into it, as in the accidental occurrence of such a case the heel prevents extraction with ease; and if the rider were unhorsed while in this predicament he would inevitably be dragged and very seriously injured.

In order to get on the horse, the rider, standing at the animal's left side, will take the middle of the reins with the right hand (in the snaffle-rein's middle there usually is a buckle, while the curb-rein is sewn) and place this right hand, together with the reins, on top of the saddle's pommel.

He will then place the left hand, flat on its back, palm upward and fingers lengthened, with their tips pointing toward his right hand, on the top of the animal's withers, in front of the reins thus held by the right hand.

He will then put the middle of the snaffle-rein in the middle of his left, upturned, palm. Then he will pass the curb-reins one on each side of the third finger—annulary—of the left hand, at its connection with the hand; draw the reins upward by their middle so that each one of them, when sufficiently shortened, bears *equally*, but *without pulling*, on each side of the curb.

While doing this he will keep an eye on the part of those reins passing between the horse's neck and his mouth, in order to make sure that they *do* bear equally, *not more* on one side than on the other. Also that they are not too tense.

Many riders who mount with reins in hand, do so without first making sure that the reins bear equally, with the result that if they do not bear equally one side of the reins pulls on the horse's mouth more than the

other. As a consequence the unfortunate horse having the head—and possibly also the neck—twisted to one side, is out of equilibrium, and cannot stand squarely before the rider starts to get on his back; and therefore, in order to regain his equilibrium he moves around.

When the rider does manage to get on his back, generally with a big thump of his 160 (or more) pounds weight, the poor animal has to move around still more actively in order not to lose his balance as a result of this clumsy impact. Although then his equilibrium is defective through no fault of his, the poor horse gets punished for it, either by a sharp action of the spurs to send him forward, often with the head still athwart—or else he is as sharply pulled back on the hocks by a more or less violent call of the hands . . . especially if people are looking on and the rider wants to show he is an expert!

Once the curb-reins thus carefully arranged, the rider ought to pull up the snaffle-reins with the same precautions, paying attention while doing so, to pass the left forefinger—index—over the right snaffle-rein, in order that this right snaffle-rein lies between the first finger—index—and the second finger—medium—of that hand.

As the rider will adjust one (double) rein, he will throw its ends over his (left) hand, onto the right side of the horse's withers; and he will do the same with the other (double) rein—the snaffle-rein—after having adjusted it. Thus, after the whole operation is over, the ends of both sets of reins will be flowing over the top of the horse's right shoulder.

In this way, before even getting on horseback, the rider will have the reins properly placed and adjusted in the left hand; because while, as we have seen, their length has been attended to, when all the reins have been

pulled up, the left snaffle-rein finds itself below the left hand's little finger; the left curb-rein between that little finger, and the third finger (or annular); the right curb-rein between the annular and the second finger (or medium); and the right snaffle-rein between the medium and first finger (or index), and all the four reins' ends pass between the first finger and the thumb, which can then, from the very start, hold them firmly.

If the rider has a riding-whip, which is the only proper thing to carry on horseback, it should be placed in the center of the palm of the *left* hand, top upward (above the thumb), in such a way that it be firmly held in the full hand—together with the reins—the thumb and all four fingers firmly surrounding it.

(Sticks and the like are simply fads which create in the mind of the onlookers a desire to ask why the rider did not take a broomstick, a rolling-pin, or a policeman's truncheon, while he was about it!)

The rider will then take a good tuft of hair of the horse's mane, at the distance of about a hand's width above the animal's withers, in order that he may be able to first hang by it when executing the initial spring and then lean upon the animal's neck when he attempts to get on the horse, as will be explained a little later.

(If the horse is one of those hog-maned animals—a sort of mane-trimming which ought not to be effected, excepting with small horses—the rider will have to lean with the left hand, as best he can, either on the top of the horse's withers, or even by passing this hand over the animal's neck so as to reach the top part of its other side, all of which without losing hold of the reins or whip; or the rider will have to seize the top of the horse's breast-plate, if the animal's accoutrement includes one, or again grab the side of the saddle's pommel as best

he can, in all of which cases he will most probably be able only to scramble on somewhat inelegantly, rather than mount in the proper way described hereafter.)

Having the tuft of mane securely in the left hand together with reins and whip as described, the rider will take a step or so backward, toward the horse's head in order to find himself, approximately, at the height of the point of the animal's left shoulder. He will then lift the left leg and try to introduce its foot into the stirrup, without using the right hand, either to guide the foot, or to seize the stirrup. (Exception to this must be allowed in favor of those suffering from rheumatism, or who have other good reasons not to observe it.) Having managed to get it in—preferably without the help of the right hand—he will push this foot as deeply as he can into the stirrup; if possible until the stirrup reaches right over the foot's arch.

The reason for the rider not touching the stirrup with the right hand is that he will thereby allow his left leg to be, before mounting, as extended as possible, which will enable him the better to "swing" on from the right foot and leg, and thus make a more satisfactory leap onto the saddle.

If he does not push the foot as deeply as possible in the stirrup, he will—as Mr. James Fillis points out in his book—kick, or at least tickle, the horse's side, which will, particularly in the case of a sensitive animal, induce the horse to move, and make it then that much harder, especially for a novice-rider, to get on his back. (It might also induce a badly mannered or ticklish horse, or especially a ticklish mare, to cow-kick.)

If, on the contrary, the rider pushes the whole foot into the stirrup, and tries, the moment he leaps on, to point the left foot's toes *downward*, under the girths, he

will not touch the horse's side with the toes, but with the *arch* of the foot, and thus avoid giving his mount the "rib-dig" that would induce him as already said, to move or even to cow-kick.

If it happens that the horse, not being a tall one, is well proportioned to the rider's height, length of leg, etc., the necessity for "leaping" on will be decreased to that extent; and so also, consequently, the necessity for his standing in front of the horse's shoulder, and of extending the left leg as straight as has been advised.

In this case, the rider will be able to stand closer to the horse, if more convenient to him—although this manner is not considered as correct as the other (I don't know why),—and will, therefore, be more easily able to take firm hold of the *right* side of the saddle's cantle, in order to mount, in the manner that will be described later.

The rider, having the left foot in the stirrup, will then make a leap from the ground by a spring with his right limb, and on his swinging toward the horse will, when nearing the animal's side again, touch the ground, sharply, and springily, with the toes of this right foot, which action will help to take him more easily and promptly toward the saddle. Extending out, simultaneously with his leg-movement, the right arm and hand toward the horse he will catch the other, or *right*, side of the saddle's cantle, which a properly executed "swing" will allow him to easily reach; and having seized it, he will by this help and the assistance from his left hand leaning on the horse's neck, *immediately* rise above the saddle.

(The reason for executing this movement without *any* delay is that if it is not executed with such promptness, should the horse move in the slightest degree the rider will have to hop, awkwardly, to and fro, on the right

foot, with the left foot hanging in the stirrup. Besides which, if the horse does move, the rider's left foot is very apt to slip out of the stirrup, with the consequent danger of his falling heavily with the chin on the saddle, thereby running the further risk of hurting his mouth severely, especially if he happens to have it open at the time, or if he happens to have the tongue badly placed in it, say between the teeth, at that very moment.)

While in the act of rising with the torso above the horse, the rider must bring his right leg close to the left, because if he fails to do this he will lose his poise and equilibrium, and will not be able to execute correctly the remainder of the action of mounting. His two legs will consequently have to be close to each other, the left foot in the stirrup, the right foot touching the left.

When rising above the horse, the rider must keep the torso erect—but not stiff—and leaning firmly on the left hand (which will then be resting on the horse's neck, besides holding the good tuft of hair as already explained, the reins, and possibly a riding-whip too), he will pass the right hand from right to left, that is from the cantle of the saddle onto its pommel, on which he will firmly place it anew, palm downward.

Leaning then again on both hands—arms extended of course, in order not to “crouch” in an ungainly manner over the horse—he will, while keeping the torso erect (but not stiff), pass the right leg, *extended at full length, high above the horse's hindquarters (Fig. 36)*, and get into the saddle *as lightly as possible*, though making his full weight sink as deeply as he can into the saddle, the moment his seat has touched it. “As lightly as possible” means that; *in doing this, there must be no thumping of the rider's weight on the horse's back*, on which it should then sink by imperceptible graduation.

There is only one exception to this rule of promptly making the rider's full weight bear on the saddle. It is in case the horse lowers the back, as some rather weak-loined horses do—for a while at least, after having been mounted on—or as some thoroughbreds, or animals who have quite a little thoroughbred blood, are also apt to do, even when not weak-backed. But as in such cases a reac-



FIG. 36.

Rider mounting correctly, with right leg fully extended above horse's croup.

tion usually takes place, which sometimes translates itself into one, or several, more or less severe, buck-jumps, the rider ought anyhow to be prepared to sit as firmly as he possibly can, as soon as the lowering process of the horse's back ceases. He must consequently also take the necessary precautions to counteract those "defences" just as soon as the horse begins to manifest the intention of indulging in them, consequently, *before* he actually buck-

jumps, or performs other antics, as will be explained later.

If, then, the horse lowers the back, the rider, instead of leaning heavily in the saddle, will lighten his weight in it, and lean a little more on the stirrups, returning his full weight into the saddle, only as soon as the back-lowering process will have ceased.

If this back-lowering process does not cease, or if it manifests itself again, from time to time, during a ride, it may be the sign of one of the three following conditions: either that that particular rider is too heavy for his mount (in which case he must be given another)—or if the rider is not heavy, that the horse is *very* weak-backed, either due to malformation or to some kidney-trouble. In both of these cases the animal is unfit for saddle purposes. He may also have a sore back through saddle-bruises, whether fresh or sometimes, of long standing.

The reasons for the rider's passing the "right leg extended to its full length over the horse's hindquarters," (*Fig. 36*), are because by doing so, he will more easily prevent his weight from bumping on to the horse's back; because, with the leg thus extended, he will, once seated in the saddle, more easily and more accurately reach the stirrup with the foot, and also because he will be able to get *deeply* into the saddle the more quickly, and with more facility than he would if this leg were all doubled up when going over.

(Anyone can make the experiment to ascertain whether or not these reasons are valid in the above mentioned cases.) The reason for the rider's "passing the right leg *high* over the horse's hindquarters" is because, if he does not accustom himself to do this, and allows himself to get into the habit of brushing his mount's

hindquarters with the right leg, he will some day come across a nervous or ticklish horse (or more especially mare) who will kick up as soon as its hindquarters' top is touched by the rider's leg; and he, being half on and half off, will find himself in a very uncomfortable situation—to say the least.

Once in the saddle the rider must quickly introduce the right foot into his stirrup *without looking down toward foot and stirrup*, as so many persons do, because, if he does look down, he will unconsciously, but nevertheless effectively, push the right half of his seat, either slightly backward, or slightly sideways, or both, on the saddle; and in either of these cases his right leg being, although however slightly pulled, either up, or back, its foot will of course not be in position to reach the stirrup as easily as it otherwise would.

In order then to take the stirrup easily, the rider should, when lowering the foot toward it, extend the right leg to the same length as the left, which will be all the easier for him to do if he has kept the right leg well extended when passing it over; and then, his foot will, automatically, get into the stirrup, the stirrup-leather having been previously adjusted to his limb's length.

As the rider places the right foot in the stirrup—which must rest therein *lightly*, and only by its *ball*, he must simultaneously (if he has not done so before), correct the position of his left foot (which, for mounting purposes had been pushed deeply in), and cause it to rest by the ball also on its stirrup. (If somebody be holding the horse, and gives him the stirrup, this will be ever so much easier.)

Now for the extremely bad habit so many riders have of falling with a heavy “bump” onto their unfortunate horse's back.

The reason why so many horses, especially in the United States, have acquired the bad habit of moving, or even of jumping around just at the time they are going to be ridden—which is precisely when they ought to be the quietest—is because people generally get onto their backs with a heavy thump.

Being therefore aware, as soon as they feel a rider putting his foot in the stirrup, that they are going to get 160 or more pounds, of practically dead weight, bumped on to their backs more or less roughly (rather more roughly than less) the poor animals may readily be excused for moving around so as to avoid the direct impact of the heavy blow.

If, on the contrary, a rider contracts the habit of getting onto his horse softly, caressingly, the animal will eventually stand stock-still of his own volition so as to receive the rider's weight, which he will then have come to consider as a caress.

And if he has already acquired the bad habit of moving, a little persuasion from the rider to keep quiet—the form of which will be explained later—in conjunction with the habit of mounting him considerately, will help him accomplish the desired effect.

(Horses love caresses quite as much as cats or dogs, and, contrary to the apparently general opinion, they prefer to be caressed very gently and softly, rather than by big handpats, more resembling blows than caresses, which so many men, and even some women, give them, probably because they believe that being big animals, horses are more appreciative of rough pappings than of soft ones.)

From the moment the rider's seat touches the saddle, he must let go the tuft of hair from the horse's mane, and thereby get fuller control of the horse's mouth, the

completeness of which he will have already afforded himself by having taken the precaution of measuring the reins and arranging them properly in the left hand before attempting to mount, as already explained.

He will get still greater control of the horse's mouth by immediately using *both hands* in the holding of the reins; and, to that effect even before his right foot has touched the stirrup, or simultaneously with this:

If he have a riding whip, he must first pull it out of the left hand by seizing its top with two or three fingers of the right hand, and drawing it on a high, slightly oblique, line from himself to his right front, as far as his right arm can extend—if the whip be that long; then passing the whip's point over the horse's withers, without tickling them, he will lower it to the length at which he desires to use it by means of a slight help from the thumb and forefinger of the left hand; thus its tip will be pointing downward, and behind his thigh, toward the horse's side. But he must of course beware that it does not touch or tickle the animal.

Holding the riding-whip tucked away at the base of the thumb of the right hand (at its junction with the palm), he will use this hand instantaneously, to take hold of the right reins, in the same way as he holds the left reins with that hand.

To this end he will push the right hand, its palm facing the left hand, toward the reins, and pass its little finger between the right snaffle-rein and the right curb-rein, so that the right snaffle-rein finds itself under the hand (or out) and the right curb-rein be between the little finger, and the third—or annulary—in such a way that, when the manœuvre is ended, the right hand will be holding its reins exactly like the left hand holds its reins.

The ends of the reins will then be found to fall, first

over the thumbs and then, quite naturally, behind the hands, and from under them, along the top of the horse's right shoulder.

All this done (which, having taken the expert rider very much less than a minute to execute, is very much longer to explain, write, or even read about, than to actually perform), the rider will find himself in a position to meet practically anything the horse can do, as far as in him lies.

This would not be the case if he had mounted without measuring the stirrups, and without adjusting the reins, and had left all that to be done after he had scrambled on the horse or thrown himself on the animal's back lumowise.

DISMOUNTING

To dismount, the rider will put all the reins in the left hand, divided as when about to mount; he will then lengthen the riding-whip (top forward) in the right hand, with the help of the left.

Once the riding-whip at a convenient length, he will introduce it in the left hand, tip downward, so that it will lie along the horse's left shoulder. He will then place the left hand, reins, whip, and all, on the horse's neck, and seize a tuft of the horse's mane firmly with the left hand to serve him as a "lean," as when mounting.

(If the horse's mane has been hogged the rider will have to do the best he can, and lean with the left fist on the top of the horse's withers, near the neck.)

The rider will then place the right hand flat on the saddle's pommel, get the right foot simultaneously out of the stirrup, then lift the right leg, passing it, flat, horizontally, *high above the horse's rump* (Fig. 36), until he has brought it back, down, close to the left leg. Pre-

cisely as when mounting, he will allow both legs to lie on a perpendicularly parallel line close to each other, and maintaining the torso erect, though flexible, he will pass the right hand, from left to right, that is from the pommel of the saddle, on to its cantle, the off side of which he will firmly take hold of.

Arrived at this point he has the choice of two ways of reaching the ground.

Either he will leave the left foot in the stirrup, and



FIG. 37.

Dismounting in a most usual and advisable manner.

letting go the saddle's cantle with the right hand, will return to the ground with the right foot first, on the same spot, and in the same manner, *only reversed*—in which he mounted—or (especially if the horse is a little too high for him), he will at this moment, leaning firmly with both hands on the horse, arms in extended support, take the left foot out of the stirrup (*Fig. 37*), and reach

the ground by a slide on both feet simultaneously—but *on the tips of the toes.*

He has strictly no effort, and unless he cares to, no *jump* to make, but has simply to slide down along the horse's flank. Before taking out the left foot from the stirrup, in order to dismount in this way, he must make very sure of the dependability of the lean with his hands, on the saddle—left hand on the horse's neck or withers, right hand on the saddle's cantle—and he must also keep the torso erect, or else he may slip awkwardly, and falling then with the chin on the saddle, he may hurt his mouth more or less severely.

He must also prepare himself to allow the reins—but not the riding-whip—to slip a little between the fingers just before landing, or else he must have them measured beforehand, long enough not to “yank” the horse's mouth while in the act of dismounting.

Because if this “yank” were to take place at that moment the horse might back or throw himself sideways, or even rear, any of which actions would create a very disagreeable sensation on the rider just when he would be scarcely gaining a foothold on the ground.

MOUNTING SIDE-SADDLE

The lady riding side-saddle has two distinct ways of getting on her horse. The first, most commonly in use, requires the assistance of a third party; the other consists of the lady getting on her horse *from the ground* unassisted.

The words “from the ground” are emphasized, because if the lady has a mounting-block at her disposal, or a solid fence, in a word any sort of contrivance on which she can stand that will bring her seat on as close a level

as possible to the saddle, she will have so very little to do in order to place herself on the horse's back, that no explanation at all would be necessary to inform her how to reach there.

The usual way for a lady to mount side-saddle is that a third party—outside, of course, of the groom holding her horse—assist the lady in the first, and sometimes also in the last, part of the operation.

In this usual way of mounting the lady can either gather the reins before leaving the ground, or gather them afterwards, *i.e.*, once she is on horseback.

This gathering of the reins, or not gathering them, beforehand, depends not so much on the lady's choice, as on her mount's capacity to stand quietly until his rider is on his back and ready to give him the signal to move. It also depends on the lady's height being sufficient to reach the front of the saddle's pommel so easily with the hand as to be able to hold the reins at the same time.

Of course a lady's horse ought to be so well trained and mannered as to stand perfectly still under practically any circumstances. But while this *ought* to be so, it is far from *being* always so, and, consequently, unless the lady is very well acquainted with the horse she is about to ride, and is therefore as sure of his good behavior as it is humanly possible to be sure of such things, it would be better for her to take the precaution of gathering the reins before trying to get on horseback. This gathering of the reins is then going to be explained, and whenever the lady will want to omit gathering them, she will simply have to do all the remainder of the operation necessary for her to mount, without bothering about the reins.

Her right hand, holding the riding-whip only, she will place on the right (or off) side of the pommel, at its basis, and consequently at the head of the saddle's seat.

With the left hand she will pull up the four reins simultaneously, bringing them in contact with her right hand, in which she will then equalize them, throwing their ends to the horse's right shoulder.

The reins will be divided between the lady's fingers as follows: *left* snaffle-rein between thumb and forefinger; *left* curb rein, between forefinger and medium; *right* curb rein between little finger and annular; *right* snaffle rein under the little finger. (Or she will take only one set of reins—say the curb—between the thumb and forefinger, and allow the other to lie on the basis of the horse's neck.)

When doing so she will take the reins (in the right hand) *from on top*, making her fingers go downward in between them, and keeping them in *the piano-players' hand-position*.

If she were not to take hold of them this way, and not keep this hand-position, she could not have as firm a lean on the pommel's side as she requires; having then that much more difficulty in getting on horseback, she would therefore cause more trouble also to her assistant in helping her to mount. Moreover, if she held her hand differently, her riding-whip's tip would touch, tickle, or even strike the horse's side, and thus excite him to move, if not to do even more than that.

Having secured the reins—for which she will necessarily have to face the saddle—the lady will then turn slightly to the *left*, so that, standing beside the horse, she faces squarely front.

With the left hand she will then slightly lift her skirt so as to be able to give the left foot to the party assisting her to mount.

In order to be in a position to give her the necessary assistance correctly this party must place himself in front

of her in such manner as to describe with his chest a diagonal line from the horse's left shoulder to the lady's left side.

Having therefore placed his feet somewhat like a left-handed fencer, the left foot's toes pointing toward the horse's girth-line, and the right foot's toes pointing toward the lady's left foot—with a distance of six inches or so between one foot and the other—he will then bend so as to be able to take the lady's proffered left foot in both hands.

(Some assistants take the lady's foot in the left hand, and placing the right hand under her left arm-pit, help her both ways.)

On putting the foot in the assistant's hand, the lady lets go her skirt and places this hand lightly on her assistant's right shoulder. The assistant (or the lady) then counts, "One," "two," "three," and on the count of "three" the lady must give herself a slight impulsion with the right foot on the ground, simultaneously stiffening the left leg, which the assistant will at that same instant lift, so that: by the impulsion from the right foot, the stiffening of the left leg, the simultaneous lifting of her assistant's hands, her lean on the pommel with the right hand, and a slight lean (instantaneously released) on her assistant's shoulder with the left hand, she will inevitably reach the saddle's seat with the right side of her own seat. On releasing her lean on the assistant's right shoulder—and consequently while rising toward the level of the saddle's seat—she will seize the left side of the saddle's pommel with the left hand, and thus help herself still better to reach the saddle.

With a slight twist of the waist to the left, and a little help from her assistant, still holding her foot, the left half of her seat will be on the saddle; she will thus be

squarely facing sideways. In order then to face squarely forward, and to pass the right leg over the pommel, the lady will have to turn her seat to the right, simultaneously pulling up her skirt from above the right knee so as to give it ample room to move, in order to be able to lift it to the extent that the knee pass above the pommel, and nestle around it, in the close embrace already described.

In order to make this embrace as close as possible, the lady will extend the right thigh to its full length on the saddle, and place the two halves of the seat parallelly across the horse's back, so that the line of her spine coincides with that of her horse's spine. (*Fig. 29.*)

As her right leg is placed, her assistant will put the stirrup to her left foot—just as he would a man's—after having passed his right hand along the saddle to flatten her skirt's creases, and the lady will simultaneously take hold of the reins with the left hand, doing it in the same way as a man would. She will then have the right reins immediately, and correctly, placed in the right hand, while she will have taken the left reins as correctly with the left hand. (That is, if she is going to use them in the English manner, which, being as we suppose a novice, she will undoubtedly do.)

(If the lady has mounted without previously adjusting the reins, her assistant—or even the groom—will then give them to her in the manner in which she intends using them.)

The other way for the lady to get on a side-saddled horse is one which requires her to be somewhat more than a novice. Besides which she must be tall enough, or the horse must be short enough, for her to be able to get on his back without assistance. Or she must be quite

a little accustomed to manage things by herself, and consequently be able to do absolutely without the help of an assistant, as with such advantages only can she herself lengthen the stirrup so as to conveniently put the foot in it—like a man—and get on horseback from the ground, as a male rider does. But in her case the difference will be that, instead of standing by the side of the horse's shoulder and facing his hind part, she will stand just a little behind the level of his girthline, facing the saddle, and rise by taking hold of the pommel with the right hand—as already described—and by seizing the top of the pommel with the left hand when half-way up.

On reaching the level of the saddle's seat with her seat, she will make the left twist of her seat—as previously described—in order to place herself partially on the saddle, immediately after which she will have to take the left foot out of the stirrup in order to be able to disentangle the right leg, to the end of passing it over the pommel, so as to put the full seat squarely on the saddle. She will then have to lean over the left side in order to re-adjust the stirrup-leather's length—unless she has a saddle on which there is a right-side contrivance whereby she can easily adjust, unassisted, the stirrup's length to suit herself.

As will be understood, this mounting from the ground without an assistant's help is too complicated an affair for a novice to perform; besides which it requires a perfectly trained, and superiorly mannered horse, to stand stock-still while all those different movements are taking place on his back.

The last part of the operation—that of the arrangement of the lady's habit—can be fulfilled by herself, or by her assistant.

In some new-fangled habits a quantity of straps, and hooks, buttons, and things, are to be found, which keep the unfortunate lady's legs absolutely imprisoned.

The number of these contrivances ought consequently to be diminished to the minimum strictly necessary to keep the skirt down under ordinary conditions. Because it is quite comprehensible that if the lady is out hunting, has to ride fast, and does some jumping, her skirt will be, at certain moments, bound to flutter more or less, unless it be pinned down most uncomfortably to her limbs.

DISMOUNTING

In order to dismount the lady has simply to take the left foot out of the stirrup, twist the seat to the left, so as to face sideways from the horse instead of facing front, while simultaneously lifting the right leg over the pommel in order to bring it close to the left leg, so that both legs dangle on the horse's left side.

If a groom or someone is there to hold the horse she may let go the reins, placing their two centres on the horse's withers. If there is no one to hold the horse she will simply take the reins with the right hand—without paying much attention as to their separation between the fingers—but she will have to measure them long enough so that when she dismounts she does not “yank” the animal's mouth, which might cause him to do no one knows what: either push himself against her if the right reins happen to be much shorter than the left, or else go backward, or even to rear.

And it is comprehensible that any such movements from the horse might have disagreeable consequences, to say the least, for the lady in the act of dismounting.

If the lady has no assistant to help her dismount, she will have to lift her skirt, in front, with the left hand, high enough not to fear putting her feet in it on reaching the ground, which might make her trip, or even have a disagreeable fall—possibly on the face—especially if the horse were to move.

She then must let herself slip down, along the horse's side, taking care to place the feet so as to reach the ground, *not only on the tips of the toes*, but also with one foot—the one most convenient to her—slightly ahead of the other, and also with slightly bent knees, in order to develop, on landing, the greatest leg-suppleness possible. It is *exceedingly important* that the lady dismount always *on the tips of the toes*—whether she has an assistant or not—because, if she were to reach the ground on the heels, or even flatfooted, the jar she would receive from the impact with the ground—whatever her leg-suppleness—especially if dismounting from a tall horse, might prove very disagreeable, even to the point of causing internal injuries, especially if flat-footed dismounting were oft-repeated.

If an assistant is at her disposal, she may not have to bother with the reins, because the assistant will possibly pass the left arm through them, or otherwise hold the horse with the left hand, and placing himself in front of her, not quite squarely, *i.e.*, with the left shoulder pointing toward the horse's left shoulder, and his right shoulder slightly away from that line, he will offer her the two hands or the right hand only, palm upward, on which to place hers. This she will do by the palm and the three last fingers of the *left* hand, while holding her skirt with the thumb and forefinger of each hand. As she will be holding the riding-whip, tip downward in the *right* hand, the assistant will take hold of this hand of

hers, not by the palm, but by the wrist; or he may not touch it at all.

When the lady will have become proficient she will require to be given just one hand by her assistant, which she will then barely touch with her own hand in order to dismount. As soon as the lady will have learned how to place the feet nicely at the moment of descending, she will dismount from the tallest horse without the slightest difficulty, and without experiencing the slightest jar.

It must be remarked that the side-saddle rider has two lower aids quite as well as the male rider, with the difference that her right aid instead of being the leg is a riding-whip. In this connection it is advisable that the lady carry a workmanlike riding-whip, long enough—say 3 feet 6 inches at least—to be of use, rather than the insignificant “toothpicks” that some persons consider “the thing.” (*Fig. 26.*)

CHAPTER IV

RIDING

POSITION OF REINS

THE manner of holding the reins previously described is called the "Second Elementary," or "English," position, although it is, in reality, a modification of the English position.

There are *nine* rein-positions, or methods, of carrying the reins, only two of which—plus the "American" one-hand position and its counterpart—will be mentioned in this elementary book.

The first position consists in the holding of one snaffle-rein in each hand, just as they find themselves placed—as already described—when the rider is on horseback; in this (first) position the curb-rein is left dangling from the left hand's third finger (or annular), or is left on the horse's withers, and it then remains at the disposal of the accompanying teacher, who will by its means hold control over the novice rider's horse. (*Fig. 38.*) (If the novice is very clumsy with the hands, it is advisable, but then only in an enclosed Ring, to have these reins knotted.)

This position is, consequently, absolutely "Elementary." The "Second Elementary" is the one in which the rider holds the reins after getting on the horse, as described in the preceding chapter.

It is also called the "English" position, although, as already said, it is a modification of that position. In the

genuine English position the curb-reins are the ones held under the little finger of each hand, instead of the snaffle-reins, which are then carried between these fingers and the third—or annular. (*Fig. 24.*)

The disadvantage of this genuine English position lies in that, each whole hand bearing on its respective curb-

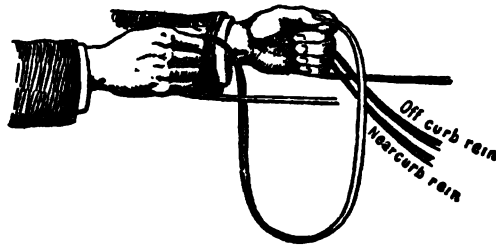


FIG. 38.

Reins held in first position.

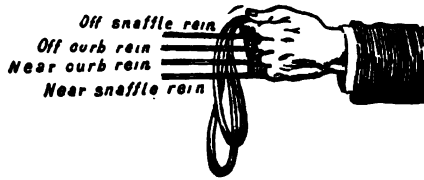


FIG. 39.

Reins held in eighth position—soldiers'—all four in the left hand.

rein, that is to say, on the most powerful of the two sets of reins, it is thus more apt to injure a horse's mouth, especially if the rider is a novice, or if, although past the novitiate, he forgets himself for some reason or other, and acts hastily or roughly, with the hands; while, with the rein-position as prescribed, *i.e.*, with the snaffle-rein under the little finger, the danger of injuring the

horse's mouth on this account is greatly diminished, because the full weight of the hand falling on the snaffle-rein (the less potent of the two), can do less damage if improperly used.

The other two positions—the “American,” and its reverse—are the eighth and ninth positions, and being difficult ones with which to *properly* handle a horse, ought to be used *only* by advanced riders, and not, as is now the case in the United States, by everybody and anybody at all who wishes to imitate the Military.

As the first of these—the “four-rein-in-the-left-hand” position (*Fig. 39*)—is used by the cavalymen of practically all countries, it ought in reality to be called the Soldiers', or Military Position; but as it is so universally used in the United States, by civilians as well as soldiers, it might as well retain the name of “American.”

The reverse of this position consists in the holding of all four reins in the right hand, the same fingers as in the case of the left hand passing between the same reins, in reversed order; that is: right reins under the little finger and the third; left reins between the third and medium, and medium and index respectively. The assertion that these two positions are very difficult to properly use will astonish most people in the United States, accustomed as they are to seeing anybody and everybody use them, some of them knowing so little how to ride on horseback, it can be said without exaggeration that they have only a “bowing acquaintance” with Equitation.

But when the readers will realize (as I hope they will after what they will find further on in this book, in the chapter treating of “Biting,” or “Flexing”), how crude is the manner now in such general use, they will admit that this assertion is not exaggerated.

Thus if, without even knowing the why and wherefore of it, one is told that in order to wield the reins correctly with one hand, the rider has sometimes to make one set of them act in one way, while the other, either simultaneously or alternately, has to act differently; for example, that often, when one set of reins is more or less tense, the other set must, or may, simultaneously, or alternately, be loose, one will understand that, far from being easy, the *correct* wielding of the reins with only one hand, is very difficult, requiring as it does, not only a great flexibility of hand, wrist, and forearm, but also a technical play of the fingers very much resembling that used in playing the harp or the guitar.

And this places the correct handling of the reins with one hand only *leagues* away from and above the usual fanlike handling of the reins in one hand only, which resembles more the shooing of flies from a pan of milk on a Summer's day, than anything pertaining to Horsemanship, especially when it is done quickly, as for example in Polo, or when a rider wishes to demonstrate how handy and "neckwise" his horse is!

The teaching of this "neckwiseness" to the horse is, moreover, usually not the result of any scientific or delicate handling, like it should be and as described further (in this book), but is very largely consequential to harsh treatment, or even to rank brutality, according to circumstances varying with the temperament, caprice, or momentary mood of the (so-called) trainer. Thus, when at first, in this unorthodox manner of neckwise training, the reins are used "against the horse's neck," (let us suppose on the right side of the neck, to induce him to throw the forepart to the left) these reins, if not properly handled, acting necessarily also on the right side of the horse's mouth, pull his head and probably also his neck,

to the right; and consequently far from inducing the animal to turn to the left, they actually attract him to the right. Instead of using temporarily the left reins to correct this impression (wrong in the rider's mind, but absolutely and logically correct otherwise, even in the poor horse's mind), some so-called trainers use a riding-whip, or a stick, or even, if deemed necessary, something more like a club, and, on the horse's manifesting the least tendency to "come" to the rein, as is natural, instead of going away from it, as is, illogically, desired of him, the rider beats him with this "persuader" on the right shoulder, the neck, the nose, or even the face, until the poor animal turns away to avoid punishment.*

When the horse, on feeling the rein pressing on his neck, turns away from it through sheer fright of the impending blows he is said to be "perfectly trained." Now, while these methods "work" with certain horses, others among the highest strung and most intelligent of the species not only resent such treatment, but categorically refuse even under coercion to do a thing which they, rightly, consider illogical. They then defend themselves so desperately that they are eventually given up as "bad eggs," or "bullheaded," or anything at all that will save the trainer's reputation. And these calumnies are thrust on them simply because they have more character, temperament, and intelligence, than their fellows!

In order then to be effected correctly, the guidance by the neck ought to be done in quite another way, and ought to be taught the horse by other means, the details of which will be given in another chapter.

* A new "stick," called "flat cutting whip," has recently been offered to the public, for that purpose.

CHAPTER V

THE WALK

Now that the rider is on horseback, presuming him to be a novice—we must consider that he carries no riding-whip; wears no spurs; holds the reins in the first elementary manner (or position) already described; and has a teacher, or somebody, to accompany him, whether on foot, or on horseback, who actually controls the horse for him by means of the curb-reins.

This being so, the rider will not be required to induce the horse to move, but must first be taught how to stop him. Anybody can make a horse go, sometimes faster than intended, and the "how" to do this is easier learned than any other feature of riding.

But it is a difficult thing, especially for a novice, to stop a horse; sometimes even a good rider of the usual sort finds difficulty in doing it. In a few cases it requires the intervention of a third party—usually a mounted policeman; and in fortunately rare cases it involves broken bones, or possibly still more serious consequences. It is therefore absolutely necessary that, from the start, the novice rider should be taught how to stop his horse correctly, with the hands, the elementary means then at his disposal. Because in Advanced Horsemanship the legs ("aids") are used in conjunction with the hands, and in High Equitation, the legs alone (and when necessary the spurs) stop the horse, as will be seen in the books treating on Equitation, and High Equitation.

Besides which, the feeling that he *can* stop his horse,

beginning to give the novice-rider some confidence, offers a further reason for teaching him this from the very starting-point of his Equestrian career. Because as "confidence" is one of the prime requisites for horseback-riding, it is never too early to develop it, and all circumstances leading to this end are to be made use of whenever encountered.

The only exception to this rule is when some foolhardy or reckless person is met, whose temerity on horseback might endanger not only himself, but also others, in which case a proper restraint must be put on him, and he must be taught to exercise control over himself, not only with a view to protecting human limb and life, but also for the purpose of preventing the commission of acts of cruelty to animals, which abuse such persons are prone to inflict on their unfortunate mounts.

Instead, then, of the novice-rider making the horse move, his "accompanist" must attend to this, and lead the animal forward by the curb-reins or induce him to go forward by any other *gentle* means, while recommending to the rider that he neither move nor stiffen, any part of the body, nor pull on the reins in the least degree, the moment he feels his mount walk under him, as so many, even not novices, are apt to do, the sole requisites demanded of him being therefore to keep still, and carry the torso *erect*, yet *flexible*.

Some persons have the false idea (or rather habit), that, when a rider wants to make a horse go, he must "take hold of his mouth." *He should do nothing of the sort*; and how illogical this action is will be realized by a very easily comprehensible simile:

If we are with a friend and wish him to leave us, do we hold his arm, or do we release it if we happened to be holding it before?

The answer is obvious. Consequently why should we take hold of the horse's mouth as if to keep him back when in reality we want him to move?

If the horse's head be too low or otherwise ill placed, the rider ought, of course, to do something to modify these irregularities; but, as soon as this end is reached, the rider who wishes his horse to go forward, whether from the "stop" to the "walk," later from the "walk" to the "trot," or to the "canter," must, simultaneously with the signal to move, give his mount complete freedom of hand in order not only that he be able to go forward in obedience to his (the rider's) own indications, but that he also be able to move freely and unhampered.

But as those corrections of the horse's head or neck positions cannot be effected by a novice-rider, considering that they involve the use of means of which he is ignorant, or which, if he has merely read about, he cannot possibly employ to any degree of satisfaction, the accompanist will attend to all this, and the novice-rider will then have nothing to do but, as already said, allow the horse to go forward, *without pulling on the reins in the least.*

This absolute freedom of reins does not mean that they must dangle, "abandoned," along the horse's neck or shoulders, but means that they be held loosely enough for the horse not to feel any action from them at all, just when he is required to go forward. Yet they should be so exactly measured that the slightest move of the hand, or even of a single finger, should be sufficient to act effectively on the horse's mouth, if he tries in the least to turn to one side or another, or to execute any other undesired simple movement, as for example, going a little faster than is desired. (*Fig. 40.*)

Nine times out of ten should the novice-rider, on

FIG. 40.

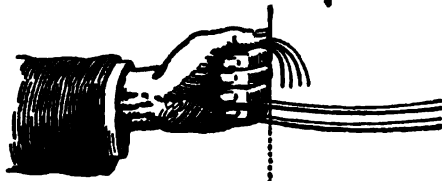


FIG. 41.



FIG. 41a.



FIGS. 40-41a.—THREE USUAL HAND POSITIONS.

40. Reins held loosely, yet not abandoned. (Termed "natural.")

41. Reins tightened to stop the horse, or for other purposes.
(Termed "taking.")

41a. Reins loosened in response to horse's light-mouthedness.
(Termed "giving.") This position has been purposely exaggerated to mark the completeness of the yielding. The hand should be returned to the position of Fig. 40, if the horse continues flexing, or to the position of 41 if he pulls again.

feeling the horse move, or perhaps even in anticipation of his moving, be told to keep the torso erect, he will believe that he is leaning too far backward. If he is being taught in a Ring (or Manège)—the best place in which to learn—and if a looking-glass is available—as should always be the case in a well-appointed Ring—it will be advisable to place him in front of it (sideways of course), so that he convince himself he is *not* leaning too far backward, but that his torso is simply erect. If not being in a Ring and no looking-glass being available, the outline of his position must be shown him by the reflection of his shadow on a house-wall.

This done, the novice must learn to stop his horse. To this end he must lean with the shoulders slightly more backward and do so particularly in order that he may increase his weight on the saddle and consequently on the horse's back. If on this signal, the horse stops—as many well-trained horses, and experienced riding-school mounts, generally will—the rider has nothing more to do. But if the horse does not stop, then a *second* after that signal he must make a gentle tension of the reins (*Fig. 41*), by *lifting* both hands *equally*, perpendicularly, while simultaneously turning them, nails upwards, and keeping them close—but not “stiffly” close—to each other. As soon as the horse stops, the rider must, *instantaneously* and *simultaneously with the “stop,”* release completely the tension of the reins, and he must modify the backward flexion of the shoulders to the straight position, *without moving the seat at all*, but do so only after he is sure his mount has definitely stopped.

Moreover, when releasing the tension of the reins, he must *not instantaneously lower* the hands, but keep them at the height they were when he effected the “stop,” until he is sure the horse has stopped. Then only will

he return the hands to normal height. Or, if he wishes the horse to stand still any length of time, he will let the hands come still lower down, going even so far as to allow them to rest on the animal's withers or on the saddle's pommel.

In order to distend the reins the rider has merely to re-turn the hand to normal position, by lowering the up-turned nails.

By keeping the hands at the level at which he obtained the stop, even when releasing the tension on the reins, the rider will maintain himself ready to prevent, by a *very* slight new action of the reins, any attempt at moving forward, on the part of the horse. This sometimes takes place with high-strung, although perfectly obedient, horses; it also often occurs in consequence of a lack of firmness in the novice-rider's increase of weight in the saddle, or a lack of definiteness in his rein-appeal, or both.

The reasons for the rider's putting the shoulders back just when asking the horse to stop are that (1) he thereby already gives his mount an indication of his intention to change his line of impulsion from the forward movement to a line *somewhat* more backward, in a word toward the "stop"; and (2) by the increase of his weight on the horse's back caused by this shoulder-lean, he not only confirms this impression on the animal's mind, but acts toward him much in the same way as would a restraining hand firmly placed by somebody on a moving person's arm, accompanied by the verbal request to stop, if the hand-action had not proved sufficient.

The request to stop which would be made to a man by word of mouth is conveyed to the horse by other means: *elementarily* by means of the reins. To this end, in the space of approximately a second after the increase

of the rider's weight on the horse's back has not proved sufficient to obtain the "stop," the definitely restraining tension of the reins is effected. This infinitesimal lapse of time ought to be allowed between the two signals, because as already stated it occurs that, especially a trained, or an experienced, horse, will stop as soon as he feels these body-actions of his rider's. *And then no rein tension being necessary, none ought to be effected.*

This rule applies as much to the "stop" as to anything else in which rein-actions are used, but if it is not observed in the "stop" and rein-action is continued after the horse has stopped, the animal may do one of three things: either move backward; or if, as usually occurs, one rein is held tighter or shorter than the other, he may wheel around, more or less precipitately; or if he happens to be excitable, and if the rein-tension is increased by reason of the rider's nervousness, he may, if not rear, at least rise on the hind-legs to a height disagreeable for the person on his back, especially if that person is a novice. On the same principle no *excess* of rein-action ought to be made *at any time*.

In order to avoid this grave error, *every rein-action considered necessary ought to be begun by the slightest possible touch*. To different individuals, the words "slightest possible touch" mean quite different things. To the man who can lift 100 pounds at arm's length, the "slightest possible touch" may mean a quarter of a pound, which, as "beginning" of a rein-touch would, in the great majority of cases, be a thousand times too much.

For the person hardly able to lift one-tenth of that weight at arm's length—especially if a young girl—"slightest possible touch" might, and most probably would, mean the smallest fraction of an ounce, which

might be nearer the mark of rein-weight which the average horse requires.

In order then that as closely uniform as possible a standard of the "slightest possible touch" be established, all readers, whether strong or not, who are desirous of developing as highly delicate a sense of hand-tact as they can attain—ought to make the following test: Try to touch a little pat of butter in a room heated at 65° with any one of the ten fingers and then *quickly* with all the fingers of each hand separately, *without leaving a mark on the butter*.

Through the difficulty they will thus experience, each one of them will realize how much care they will proportionately have to take, and how much they will have to practice, in order to attain the required amount of delicacy of tact, a quality so preeminently necessary for all those who wish to ride properly.

As, for a rider to have "good hands" "promptness of action" has to be added to this "delicacy of tact," the reader will readily understand how steady and constant will have to be the cultivation of the necessary qualities before, especially a powerful individual, heavy-boned, and tensely muscled, may be said to possess them.

In order the more quickly and surely to reach that so very desirable aim, three rules are then to be observed:

(1) *Always begin using the reins by the fingers.* If the mere tightening of the fingers on the reins suffices to obtain what is required from the horse, there is absolutely no need of doing more. If it is found necessary to do more than tighten the fingers, very easily and very quickly can the hand be used, then the wrist, then the forearm. For example: I have had to use my arms only with a half dozen horses in New York City which, for commercial and other reasons, I had to ride before hav-

ing them sufficiently prepared by "foot-work," and then I had to use my arms only the first three or four days I rode them. ↗

On the other hand: although while I lived in Europe I usually handled far more difficult horses than I had to contend with in New York, as they belonged to me, I could spend on them all the time necessary for proper preparatory foot-work, and I therefore don't remember having had to use more than my forearms, at the very utmost, and then perhaps only the first few days I rode those horses

(2) *As the fingers are being put in use, a slight upward turn of the nails (especially of those of the little and third fingers), must be made, so as to develop correctly the necessary rein-action. (Fig. 41.)* With much greater reason must the upward turn of *all* the nails be insisted upon and increased, when the use of more than the fingers, say of the hand—or the wrist—is found necessary. This increased upward turn of the fingers and hand inevitably involves the revolving of the wrist, which, as said elsewhere, enhances its flexibility, and therefore, while producing an extra tension on the reins, it does not induce heaviness because, notwithstanding its increased action over the horse it simultaneously helps the rider attain an ever-increasing mellowness of hand and delicacy of touch, especially when the following rule is fully observed.

(3) *To whatever extent the rider may find it necessary to use the hand, wrist, and forearm, he must never stiffen the biceps.* As the rider will become more proficient, and therefore his horse (or horses) become more docile, he will find the use of even his forearm becoming less and less necessary.

The stiffening of the biceps, even when the hand is

comparatively light, communicates to the horse, through the reins, a feeling of stiffness which invites him to stiffen the neck, and jaw in return, and incites him to become hard-mouthed, either eventually, or even sometimes very shortly after being thus handled.

An appreciation of how the horse realizes this process of the stiffening of the biceps may be gained by making a very simple experiment with the assistance of a third party, especially if that third party is sensitive, consequently, preferably a person of the female sex. The hand of that third party being then lightly held by the experimenter, he will gradually stiffen his biceps, *without increasing the strength of his hand-hold*; and although the hand strength will not have been increased, the third party will feel this process of the stiffening of the biceps reflecting itself in her own arm, which for this purpose we will consider as the horse's neck. After a very short while *her* arm will begin to stiffen in response; and then the feeling of stiffness which the experimenter will have developed in her arm will begin to be felt by him. Thus he will understand how it is that, by communicating their feelings to the animal, *intelligently tactful hands*, neither arbitrarily light, nor arbitrarily strong, backed by supple biceps, will help lighten a horse's mouth, and consequently how the stiffening of the biceps makes hands "bad," even if they are not actually "hard."

He will, therefore, also understand how it is that a horse becomes hard-mouthed, sometimes in a few minutes, even though he may have been always light-mouthed when ridden by some other person.

Besides this disadvantage, serious as it is, consequent to the stiffening of the biceps, there is another disadvantage which, combined with it, may develop under

certain circumstances, still more serious consequences that are here set forth:

If the stiffening of the biceps is continued for any length of time, not only does it extend to the top of the torso, eventually involving the shoulders and shoulder-blades, and consequently developing topheaviness through decrease of the upper half of the body's flexibility, but the upper limbs' strength being then localized in the arms, *i.e.*, above the elbows, the hands, instead of acquiring force by reason of this increased display of strength, actually lose a certain amount of their power.

Thus the rider who commits the mistake of stiffening the biceps places himself in two distinct ways at his horse's disposal: by the decrease in stability due to topheaviness, and by the decrease in hand-power due to improper distribution of upper-limb energy.

And if the horse is just at that moment ever so little excited he will, very likely, take advantage of the unfavorable conditions, were it only to have a little fun at the rider's expense. Because some horses being more playful than others, appreciate a joke just as well as most humans of a similar temperament.

As already advised: when a rider wishes to use the reins he has, excepting in very few instances to lift them more or less, which he does by first turning the finger-nails upward.

Contrarily then, when he wants to release this action on the reins, and give complete, or relative, freedom to the horse's mouth, the rider will have to make a more or less prompt, *but always elastic* return of wrist, and fingers to their original position.

But when effecting these finger, hand, and wrist, turns and re-turns, the rider must take strict heed *not to involve any other part of his body*, and especially not to

move the seat or legs, which too many riders, even other than novices, are, strange to say, apt to do unconsciously. (A trick common to many riders—even not novices—is to stiffen the small of the back, and consequently throw the shoulders forward, whenever they have to pull on the reins.)

It will have been noticed that while most teachers, and

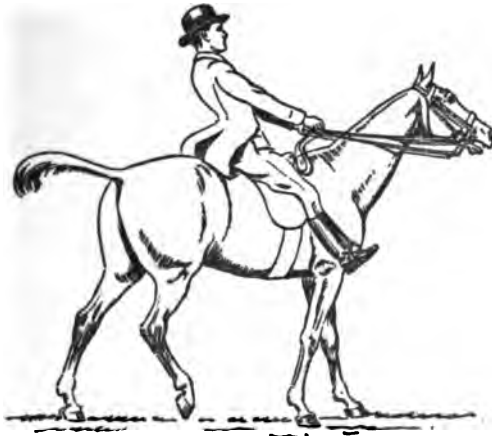


FIG. 42.

Incorrect, horizontal pull of reins to try stopping a horse. Notice unsatisfactory (tug-o'-war) results on both horse and rider in consequence of "hands low."

professional riders advocate "low hands" to be used at the moment of stopping the horse, the elevation of the reins, and consequently, to a greater or lesser extent, the elevation of the hands, is so strongly advocated here. This difference of opinion is based on the following reasons:

When the horse moves forward he does so on a *hori-*

zontal plane, his back being practically horizontal from withers to tail. His impulsion, and therefore the strength he develops to move, are also manifested *on a horizontal plane*. Consequently if, when the rider tries to stop his mount he pulls the reins towards himself with *hands low*, he uses the reins also *on a horizontal plane*.



FIG. 43.

Stop correctly obtained. Notice result of elevation of hands (here purposely exaggerated) on horse's head, neck and legs. (Compare with Fig. 42.)

(Fig. 42.) The fact of the horse's "pushing" on the horizontal plane, and of the rider's "pulling" on that selfsame plane, practically constitutes a tug of war, in which the stronger must inevitably win, unless he give up through exhaustion, dullness, or sheer good-naturedness. Stopping under any of these three conditions being then no credit to the rider's controlling power will give neither him, nor his mount, the feeling that he does possess any such

power. He will therefore sooner or later lose confidence in himself and his horse will simultaneously learn to disrespect him, in consequence of feeling his rider's indecisiveness, fruit of loss of confidence, through loss of power.

Instead of which, when the rider elevates the hands to make his mount stop, the horse's head and neck rise, and his impulsion being *diverted thereby from the horizontal plane to the perpendicular*, he is bound to stop, because to follow it would be to climb thin air: and that he cannot do.

There is also another reason for which the horse has to stop when his head and neck are thus raised.

It is because the weight of his head and neck being brought back on his withers, acts as a check for the remainder of his body, which then confronts this check as if it were a wall. (*Fig. 43.*)

This rule applies "in theory" to all horses except "in practice" to those star-gazers who run away with heads high up in the air.

Such horses ought not to be ridden, in the open, by the average rider, let alone the novice, nor in fact by anybody at all, until after having been submitted, in an enclosed area, to a careful training, and taught to yield the jaw, and flex the neck (at the crest) in response to the action of the rider's *legs*, and even to the action of his spurs, rather than to the action of his *hands*.

Eventually, when thus trained, these horses become perfectly amenable to even (I should say: to especially) *the slightest rein-action*.

But, *theoretically*, even those star-gazing horses can be stopped by the elevation of the reins, *if* the rider be tall enough to lift his mount's head to a sufficient height, and bring it as far back as may be necessary for its

weight, and the neck's weight, of course, to react on the animal's withers checkwise, *and provided* that the reins do not act at the time on a line parallel with horse's head, as then their lever-action being annulled, they would produce no effect whatever on the animal's mouth.

Besides the two hand-movements caused by the turning and returning of the fingers, called respectively "take" and "give," the proper time for which will be explained in detail in the chapter of this book treating on "Flexion," there are yet two other movements which must be used for the proper handling of the reins: the "sustain,"—in French "*soutien*"—and the "tremolo."

CHAPTER VI

TURNING

Now that the rider will have learned to stop his horse from the walk, he must begin to learn how to turn him to the right and to the left while at the walk.

To this end he will effect a gentle tension on one side of the horse's mouth with one of the reins—say the right snaffle-rein to indicate (or signal) him to turn to the right. As the horse yields to this rein-action and changes direction, *slight as the change may be*, the rider must relax the rein-tension.

If he wants the horse to make a slightly shorter turn, he must repeat this rein-action; and repeat it again and again, at ever closer intervals if necessary, accordingly as he may wish to make his mount turn shorter and shorter.

It must nevertheless be understood that, at this early stage of his equestrian career, the rider cannot be expected to execute more than very elementary changes of direction, and as this is an "Elementary Book," for the use of the rider who simply wants to ride outdoors and does not intend executing any elaborate Ring-figures, no complicated turnings, neither on forehand, nor on aft, will be described.

This manner of turning a horse—termed: "by direct rein action"—is the *most* elementary; and none other should be used by the novice-rider until he gets a better idea of the handling of the reins. Later on, when he

will have acquired a slight knowledge of the use of the legs, he will learn a more advanced, and better, means of turning a horse.

Many persons have the false notion that when a horse turns, or is about being turned, they must make a movement of some sort on his back.



FIG. 44.

Rider twisting when turning his horse—INCORRECT. Notice bad effect on elbow, and shoulders out of line of horse's shoulders. (Compare with Fig. 46.)



FIG. 45.

Rider leaning toward side of turn—INCORRECT. Notice loss of balance and bad effect on his right leg, which actually tends to push the animal's hindquarters to the opposite direction. (Compare with Fig. 46.)

Thus there are persons who think they help the horse turn by twisting the seat to that side; others think they help him by leaning the torso toward the side of the turn, sometimes to the extent of lifting a part of the seat off the saddle. *Both ideas are absolutely wrong, as explained below.*

(*Fig. 44.*) The rider who "twists" the seat to the right let us say, at the horse's turn to the same side, instead of helping him, actually pushes him to the opposite side as a result of that twist; and if, as is to be expected, his right leg comes near enough to the horse's flank in consequence of the displacement of his hip, it helps still more to push the animal's body toward the opposite direction.

And thus: while the horse's *head, neck, and forepart* are being *attracted* to the *right*, as we have said, by means of the right rein-action, his *body* is *induced* to the *left* by the twisting of the rider's seat, and his *hindquarters* may even be *pushed* to the left, by the unconscious action of the rider's leg, however slight this action may be.

(*Fig. 45.*) By "leaning" toward the side of the turn, instead of helping the horse, as so many believe, the rider hinders him, because, by acting thus, he creates an arbitrary equilibrium, which, not being his horse's, the animal must adjust himself to, instantly, although it will, of course, not suit his purpose quite as well (if at all), as the equilibrium he would have chosen of his own accord had the rider not interfered by leaning.

(Any one desirous of appreciating this will easily be able to experiment by carrying a child astride on the shoulders, and turning alternately: (*a*) while the child is sitting snugly and tight; or (*b*) while making the child lean more or less heavily to the side of the turning. This experiment will suffice to cure anyone from leaning to his horse's turn.)

(*Fig. 46.*) What the rider has to do, when he wants to make the turn—especially when the turning is to be sharp—is to lean squarely backward. He thus frees the horse's forepart of that much weight, thereby enabling not only his front legs, but also his shoulders to turn more easily.

He thereby also adequately satisfies the idea of the

rider having to modify his equilibrium at the precise moment his mount turns, justly guessed at, but inappropriately met, by those who believe that twisting on the



FIG. 46.

Rider leaning slightly back on the turning—CORRECT. No impairment of rider's position; no counter-indication given to the horse. (Compare with Figs. 44 and 45.)

saddle or leaning to the turn are the correct things to do.

The following is the reason why *leaning backward at the moment of turning* is the only correct thing to do.

While the horse is going forward on a straight line,

his burden (consequently the rider) necessarily follows that same straight line impulsion.

As the horse changes direction and consequently modifies his line of impulsion, the rider not being absolutely united to him (like he would be if he were tied to his back, for example), inevitably continues on that straight line impulsion for, let us say, a fraction of a second, which is quite sufficient a space of time to unseat him, if he is a novice, or to give his seat an uncomfortable feeling of indecision, if he is a more advanced rider.

If, on the contrary, a fraction of a second before the horse is turned, the rider leans backward, he cuts (destroys) the straight line impulsion in himself, and leaning squarely backward—that is, squarely with his shoulders continuously maintained on a line parallel with the horse's shoulders (*Fig. 46*) he is in a position to better follow the new line of impulsion taken by the horse.

For this same reason, if the horse turns unexpectedly—when shying, let us say—the rider ought to do his best to throw the shoulders backward as quickly as possible which, as he will probably soon have the opportunity of appreciating, is his only protection in such cases against being unseated, and even against falling off, head forward, if the horse turns round sharply.

(In order to appreciate how necessary it is to put the shoulders backward just at the moment of turning, the rider will only have to watch what occurs to other novice-riders—and to a slightly more or less inferior degree even to more advanced riders—who do not take this pre-turning precaution.)

It cannot be strongly enough recommended that, when for some reason or other the rider puts, or has to put, the shoulders exaggeratedly backward, he ought not to permit his lower legs to go forward nor still less should

he push them forward, as so many riders have the bad habit of doing, and as so many teachers commit the grave mistake of advising.

If the rider, when leaning backward, permits his lower-legs, and feet, to go forward, not only does he thereby adversely influence his seat, but, losing contact with the horse's flanks, he is unable to prevent any undesired turning movement of the animal's hindquarters, or any leaning of his mount's body, to one side or the other, both of which motions would further tend to decrease his stability in the saddle.

When the change of direction is not a *turn*, but simply a slight deviation from the straight line, the rider need not lean the shoulders backward, but has merely to "follow the horse."

A little experience will soon teach him how far the shoulders should lean, when necessary. In other words, no unnecessary movements must be made, and when certain movements are advisable they must not be unnecessarily marked, or, still less, exaggerated.

CHAPTER VII

USE OF THE LEGS

Now that the rider will have learned to (elementarily) turn his horse, he must practise how to make him go forward *correctly* from the "stop" to the "walk," because up to the present the horse has, supposedly, been urged forward by the teacher or the accompanist.

The horse's motion forward being obtained through indications from his rider's legs, the novice must learn how to use them properly.

Just as the beginning of the rein-touch must be as light as possible, so the beginning of the leg-touch must also be as light as possible. To do this the rider will have to start using the legs from the upper part of the calves, first pushing them a tiny bit backward, both legs equally; then by means of one, two, or more gentle leg-taps, he will invite the horse to go forward.

If the horse, for some reason or other, does not instantaneously move forward in response to those one or more gentle taps, the novice will repeat them and not receiving any response, will effect the same gentle taps with the fat of the calves, consequently with the legs moved slightly more backward; if no response ensues he will repeat the taps with that part of the lower-legs between the calves and ankles, thus pushing them still more backward; eventually, if necessary, he will use the heels too; and even, if still necessary, he will increase the strength of the taps, more or less gradually to actual blows, if the horse is such a "cold" one as not to respond

posite Fig. 49.) The nonobservance of these two important "points" in leg-action inevitably causes the opening of the knees, the loosening of the thighs, and the consequent decrease in the firmness of the rider's hold on his mount.

Another reason for beginning the leg-action with such gentle touches is that, especially if the rider is a novice and surprises the horse by employing a more violent means of sending him forward than is necessary, he will, or at least may, receive a much more vigorous response than he had expected, and thus have the disagreeable sensation of being unseated, practically before the animal has started gaining ground. Incidentally it may be said that an expert rider begins all leg-actions very lightly because of always seeking to maintain the horse's mental poise and equanimity. And, if wise, he will especially aim at maintaining that mental poise and equanimity precisely when requesting from his mount the development of the highest possible action or the greatest energy.

The ruffling of a horse's temper is always a fault, even when mistakenly committed by an expert rider. In support of this we have the opinion of Mr. Fillis who says in his book, "Riding and Breaking": "The good rider fights his horse to a finish, but the best rider obtains what he wants from his horse without getting him into a temper." (These may not be the exact words, but that is their substance and meaning.) There are nevertheless some few horses—especially rare among the well-bred ones in the United States—that cannot be considered "trained" until, and unless, they have been conquered in a fight. But as such horses are not to be handled by novice-riders, they constitute "another story."

CHAPTER VIII

THE TROT

Now that the novice-rider does these few things, he must begin learning how to trot, and how to make the horse start from the "walk" to the "trot."

This is done by exactly the same means, and in exactly the same way, as those employed to make the horse start from the "stop" to the "walk." Consequently: the rider will *not* take "hold of the horse's mouth," but will keep the reins very precisely measured—as recommended before—*i.e.*, loose enough *not* to touch the horse's mouth, and yet ready to correct any wrong direction he may wish to take, etc. (*Fig. 40*)—and will use the legs with the same initial degree of lightness, and subsequent graduation, if necessary, as already advised for the starting from the "stop" to the "walk."

A very slow "jog" must at first be obtained; and, for the first time—or the first few times, according to the novice's adaptability—only a few steps of the jog—literally not more than three or four, at the very outside half a dozen—will be sufficient to give the rider a taste of this new motion.

(If the novice is learning in a Riding Academy, which, as already said, is, when available, the proper place to receive riding instruction, and a choice of horses is consequently at his, or his teacher's, disposal, the best thing for him will be to have a quiet but willing horse, with

an easy trot, in order that, for the first time especially, he should not be shaken up too much.)

The rider ought to "sit" to the trot in exactly the same position as when at the walk: with erect but relaxed torso; correct position of the legs, etc., and as he will have already learned to stop the horse from the walk, so now he will have to learn to make him pass from the "jog" to the "walk," for which he will have to do exactly the same thing he did to make him pass from the "walk" to the "stop"—i.e., lean the shoulders back; increase the weight of the seat in the saddle; and, a fraction of a second later, lift the reins lightly at first and then a little more—if at all necessary—until the horse "walks" (*Fig. 43*); because the animal may get down to the "walk" as soon as he feels the rider's shoulders go backward, in which case rein-action is superfluous. He will thus gradually learn to act with the reins so discreetly, and yet with such definiteness when necessary, as to make the horse "walk," but not "stop." (Most novices use too much strength and stop the horse when in reality they only wish to make him walk.) At first he will make the horse walk a few steps, say ten or twelve, or perhaps more in between jogs; then he will gradually diminish the number of walking-steps; but still during the first day (or days) they must be sufficiently numerous to give him an opportunity of correcting his position, his seat, his flexibility, and so forth, which will necessarily have been more or less impaired by the strangeness of the new gait. This done, the rider will again start the horse "jogging" (for politeness sake called "trotting") another few steps, and then walk a few steps, and so forth, quite a few times. In fact, it would be better if he were to continue, or rather to repeat, this exercise, until he can correct his position, etc., practically, if not absolutely, with-

out having to walk the horse. By this time he will have gradually been able to jog about tenfold the number of steps he could without walking when he started learning to ride at this gait.

It must now be said, contrary to the bad custom prevalent probably all over the United States, *the novice-rider must not be allowed, still less taught, to "rise" to the trot* (otherwise called "posting"). He must learn at first, and during quite a while be made to "sit" to the trot, *as closely*, as firmly, and yet above all, *as flexibly* as possible.

The reason for this rule is that one of the first and principal requisites for riding on horseback correctly being the quality of the rider's seat, not when the horse is stopped, but when he is in motion; not when he is moving slowly, but when he is going fast, or otherwise displaying energy; it is absolutely necessary that he be taught, first and foremost, to sit correctly under circumstances leading up to those extremes, therefore with erect torso, properly placed head, arms and hands, and with seat and legs firmly yet flexibly carried and used, *when the horse trots. (Figs. 7, 8 and 9.)*

In order to learn to maintain those conditions with any degree of thoroughness under difficult circumstances it is therefore necessary for him to first learn not to allow them to be impaired in him by the pounding of the trot.

Once he will be able to sit correctly and easily on a hard trotting horse going at an average fast gait—say a mile in three minutes or thereabouts—he will have acquired a "quality" of seat which will not only astonish him, but enable him, according to his natural abilities, to do more difficult things (as, for example, jump correctly) than he would have been able to accomplish had he not learned to sit to the trot properly. It will give him

at the same time an elegance in the saddle which will place him easily above the average good rider, even if the latter has been riding many years before he began.

Thus it is that, according to the degree in quality of riding a person wishes to attain, he must keep "sitting to the trot" for a more or less lengthy period before attempting to "rise."

If his ambition be to reach approximate expertness, he must continue sitting to the trot during *at least* six months of daily riding; he must change horses as often as possible; he must more specifically change a horse whose gait he has come to like; and he must make it a point to try and ride well a horse whose gaits and manners he *dislikes*, passing to another horse as soon as he has learned to like the preceding one. As he will improve, he will, of course, choose harder-gaited, and more uncomfortably-going horses; but nevertheless, it is not advisable for him to insist *too much* when some *too hard-trotting horse is met with*. It is better, in this case, to try another less hard-going horse, and return later to the harder-going one, which will then be considered less disagreeable. It may even be good for the beginner to ride him only during half a lesson, every three or four days, then every two or three days, and so forth; unless there should be reasons for his giving up riding that particular horse altogether. For the most part, in consequence of tense abdominal muscles, the pounding is at first felt by the novice-rider in the gastric and abdominal regions; so, in order to the sooner help overcome this, the only thing for him to do is to increase the flexibility and relaxation of the abdominal muscles.

To this end, it is excellent that, from time to time—whether at the walk or at the trot—the rider take some deep-breathing exercises, closing the mouth for as deep a

breath-inspiration as he can—which will involve, of course, the stomachic and abdominal muscles, and opening the mouth wide for the expiration, as when learning deep-breathing for voice culture.

If young-lady riders complain of other interior organs troubling them—which will be manifested by a disagreeable sensation of heaviness in the lower-abdominal region—it will be advisable in these, fortunately rare cases, not to insist too much on making them sit to the trot, but on the contrary have them “rise” to the trot earlier than would otherwise have been the case; perhaps even advise them to give up riding altogether. In such extreme cases medical advice ought to be sought, preferably from a physician who has had Equestrian experience.

When the rider will be able to sit to the “jog” for a while without modifying his position, seat, or limberness—which may occur in two or three lessons (or rides)—he will begin learning to turn the horse right, and left, at this gait (the “jog”).

In order to do this he will have to use the rein (always a direct rein for the time being, the right rein to turn to the right, and vice versa), in such a way as not to interfere with the horse's gait, in other words, with such lightness, and yet decisiveness of touch, that the horse will understand what is wanted of him and yet not change to a slower gait.

It very often occurs that a novice not having confidence in his means of action, and not realizing the power of the rein-effect he makes, uses too much strength in turning the horse, and thus prevents him from maintaining his gait while turning. The study of the necessary amount of effort to be made under those circumstances will enable the rider to acquire still greater delicacy, and precision, of rein-action.

But in case that, notwithstanding these precautions, the horse does slow up more or less, the rider must remember that by gentle taps of the legs, especially of the opposite-leg (beginning always with the topmost free part of the lower-leg, and increasing, as already explained, according to necessity), he will be able to make his mount maintain the trot while turning.

By doing this the rider will also begin to learn how to use the legs with tact, and discretion, that is to say, with the required appropriateness both of time and strength. He will then better appreciate the advantage of having the lower-legs properly placed, *i.e.*, with the perpendicular from the knee to the tip of the toe (*Fig. 7*), because without this leg-line, he would not be in a position to observe delicate little differences of leg-touch. Now: although the turnings attempted by the rider at this early stage of his Equestrian career will not be sharp, he must lean the shoulders backward as if they *were* sharp. He must do this first in order to learn to do so, on general principles; and then in order to begin accustoming himself to lean thus backward easily and practically instinctively, on a turning, which, as has been shown elsewhere, is so necessary when a horse makes an unexpectedly brisk turn. (The reason for using the opposite leg, when wishing to turn a horse to a side, is because, by so doing the rider "pushes" the animal's body, and hindquarters to that side.)

When the rider will be able to have his horse make these turnings properly, and will himself be able to sit correctly, etc., while obtaining them, it will be time for him to learn how to make the horse pass from the jog to the real trot.

This is done, of course, by means of the same leg-actions as those already used to make him start from the

stop to the walk, and from the walk to the jog; and there is consequently no need of repeating their explanation.

Now that the horse will be really "trotting" the rider will naturally, feel the bouncing a little more, in fact, perhaps so much more, that he will wish to avoid the disagreeable feeling. *In this he will be wrong.* The best way for him to learn, in time, not to feel the sensation (in a time more or less near or distant *according to the degree of his "laisser-aller" and flexibility in the saddle*) will be for him to *sit as low down as he can in the saddle*, and, in the vernacular "to take all the bouncing coming to him."

After a few times of such "conscientious pounding," followed by some other exercises that are going to be described—the novice will be astonished at being able to sit to quite a goodly amount of trot without feeling its effects nearly so much as he had previously, and at eventually being able to sit longer to the trot practically without feeling the pounding at all. But before going further, warning must be given against falling into the following mistake committed so generally by both riders and teachers in the United States:

Even when there are *excellent* medical reasons for doing so, e.g.: a prompt reduction of flesh, *a rider should never feel tired-out on dismounting.* In cases of desired reduction of superfluous flesh, it is then far preferable that a person use, while riding, some warm garments inducing abundant perspiration, rather than overfatiguing himself. After riding in such garments, a hot shower bath, immediately followed by a *short* cold one, then by a brisk and complete drying and ultimately by an alcohol rub, before putting on the walking garments and *before facing the free air*, will be found not

only invigorating, but also a guarantee against catching cold.

But, in order to be on the safe side, medical advice ought to be sought for such cases before riding is indulged in, as attention must be paid that the person's heart be in good condition. And even when medical advice has been obtained, riding must not be overdone; thus a rider, and especially a novice must *never* be allowed to ride so hard as to be "tired out" when he dismounts, but must have after a lesson, or ride, the exhilarating sensation of having achieved something, and yet feel fresh enough to begin all over again.

Fatigue indicates a loss of vitality, in other words, fractional suicide. As even partial-death is abhorrent to human nature, it occurs that after a time, without being able to say exactly when or why, the person who will have been regularly riding himself tired, will get disgusted with the exercise and give it up sooner than he would have otherwise, although he may have been the first to have suggested riding that hard.

The riding-teachers then, who will have irreflectively yielded to their charges' early desires, will eventually find, to their sorrow, that they will have involuntarily inflicted a harm not only upon themselves, but, what is worse, harmed Horsemanship in general by the loss of a number of its adepts who will have abandoned it, sometimes for an indefinite period, sometimes forever, on that account; because it is very rare to find people whose organism is resistant enough to follow-up indefinitely the "tiring-out" policy of exaggeratedly hard riding without appreciable loss of vitality, and consequently without ultimate distaste for the exercise.

Moreover, while the conservation of his own forces must be taught the rider, he must also be taught to con-

serve the horse's forces, and to consider a little more humanely the poor animal's feelings of fatigue, as well as the necessity he also has for at least partial rest during rides.

To this end, the rider must be advised *not* to take the entirety of his rides at one and the same gait which, apart from being injurious to himself, is also injurious to the horse—and even cruel if the gait chosen be fast and is pushed to excess. He must consequently learn to make the horse vary his gaits during a ride; to begin a ride always with a walk, follow it up with a little trot—more or less fast—then walk again, then canter, and so forth; returning home (or going to the place at which he will dismount to stay there more or less permanently) at a walk—a calm walk—which is the gait at which he should always make it a point to finish his rides (excepting of course, if there should be some good reason for going fast, as for example, to avoid an oncoming rain-storm, etc.).

There are three reasons for which this rule ought to be observed, especially with young horses, or with horses in process of training:

1st. If horses are accustomed to return home fast, each time they will be turned homeward they will get excited, and become more or less unmanageable, according to their temperament. Thus it is that so many horses have a trick of running away, or at least of going so fast when returning home that novice-riders believe they are having a runaway. For this reason, one must take special care always to bring young horses, or horses in training, home at a calm walk, even if not always at a very slow walk, because, just as in man, bad habits contracted in youth, or in the early stages of their learning, are more difficult to eradicate than those which may

be contracted when they are older, or after their *education* has been confirmed.

2nd. If horses are returned home going fast, they are apt to reach their stable sweating; and unless they have good groom-attention and meet other favorable stable-conditions, on their return, they run the risk of catching cold, or of even worse things befalling them. (It is also useless to increase the servants' work when it can so easily be avoided.)

3rd. If a horse return home at a fast gait, he may be more or less short of breath on reaching there; and if he should eat or drink anything while in this condition he would be apt to suffer from other ailments besides colds.

PRECAUTION TO BE OBSERVED WHEN TURNING AT FAST GAITS

Once the rider knows how to trot—and, according to his natural abilities, probably to trot pretty fast—he must learn to turn the horse to both sides at the faster gaits. He must nevertheless avoid now, or in the future, turning the horse too sharply when trotting real fast. Whenever one is going at a fast gait—whether trot or canter, and with still more reason when at the *gallop*—if a more or less sharp turn has to be negotiated, the horse must be made to go slower, or much slower, as the case may be, lest he slip and fall on the side. When such an accident occurs, it usually means the breaking of the rider's leg, and possibly other injuries, which in man are fortunately curable; but it also often means the breaking of one of the horse's legs, which being incurable, signifies the necessity of having the animal destroyed as soon as possible.

The rider, having reached this point, will have to learn how to make his mount turn by means of the "opposite-rein," used in conjunction with the "direct-rein." The *elementary* technique of this rein-combination, as well as the reason for its being employed are explained in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IX

THE USE OF THE OPPOSITE REIN

The horse's propulsion is determined mainly by the movement of his legs *in diagonal pairs*, when travelling at any one of the three classical gaits: walk, trot, and canter. This diagonal-pair movement is especially noticeable when the horse trots, because of their better synchronization at this gait than at the two others. In order, then, to progress at this gait the horse marks *two distinct beats* at every full step. *Each trot beat is then effected by the movement of one diagonal pair of legs.* Thus the right foreleg and the left hindleg moving together constitute one beat, and the movement of the left foreleg and of the right hindleg together, constitutes the other beat. Each diagonal pair of legs is distinguished from the other by the name of the foreleg comprising it; thus, the right diagonal is made up of the horse's right foreleg and left hindleg, his other two legs making up the left diagonal. (Strictly speaking this nomenclature ought not to be applied because the impulsion starting from the horse's hindquarters, the hindleg being the prime-mover, ought to give its name to the diagonal pair instead of the foreleg, giving it that name, which latter then names the pair simply because of its foremost position.)

It consequently occurs that, when moving straight forward at the trot, the horse is in reality propelled by a succession of diagonal impulsions working at cross purposes. And it is only by the equality existing between

these cross-purpose impulsions that, in their complexity, they propel the horse forward on a straight line.

If it were possible to suspend movement in one of these diagonal pairs of legs—for example, in the left diagonal—without the horse's falling, while the other diagonal pair would continue moving, the animal would be compelled to go all to one side. Consequently, in order to follow this example, he would be compelled to turn indefinitely to the right—in fact, he could not do otherwise.

The diagonal-line impulsions being stronger at the trot than at the other two gaits (walk and canter) and becoming increasingly more marked the faster a horse trots, they constitute the reason why it is more difficult to turn a horse to any side at this gait, because of the greater facility he then has of taking the tangent of the new circular line his rider wishes him to follow, rather than that new line, by the simple process of developing more energy (more movement forward) in the diagonal pair of legs of the side contrary to that which his rider wishes to turn him.

The facility with which, by reason of its increased diagonal-line impulsion, the trot affords the horse to resist his rider's indication to turn, is proved by the oft-repeated circumstance that when, being at the walk the horse attempts to resist his rider's indication to turn he will, unless he balks, invariably start trotting, and will also invariably push his other shoulder forward.

For example: if it is desired that he turn to the right, the horse will increase the impulsion on his left diagonal. Occasionally, on refusing to turn he may even start cantering; and then he will usually break into this gait with the opposite leg leading; consequently—to continue with the same example—when refusing to turn to the right, he will break into the left canter.

In order then to overcome this difficulty which the rider is bound to meet, were it even at an infinitesimal degree when he wishes to make the horse turn, smoothly and easily while going at a more or less fast trot, he will have to combine another rein-action with the direct rein-action which he has been hitherto using exclusively. This other rein-action, as already stated, is the "*opposite rein action*," also called "guiding by the neck," or "neck-wiseness."

The "direct-rein-action" is then the *natural* means of turning a horse, and the "opposite-rein-action" is an *artificial* means of so doing.

It has already been explained elsewhere in this book that the actual manner of using the opposite-rein has no scientific basis, and that the method by which the poor animals are taught to obey it is usually fraught with brutality more than anything else.

When a rein is thus used in opposition, it should merely push the horse's shoulder *to the side to which the direct-rein has already attracted his head*, and probably also part of his neck; but if the animal's shoulder follows the other one without difficulty the opposite-rein action becomes superfluous. (This usually takes place when the horse obeys the legs well.)

But in order that the opposite-rein be correctly employed it must be used *as* an opposite-rein; and *not* be handled in such a manner as to *attract* the horse's head to its own side (*Fig. 50*), as in this case it would act as a *direct-rein*, and its effect of "opposition" would be negated.

For example; when wishing to turn the horse to the right the rider must use the *left-rein* as the *opposite-rein*, wherewith to *push* his mount's left shoulder to the right. While yet a novice, especially, or when riding an insuf-

ficiently trained horse, he must use the opposite rein *only* in combination with the direct rein—not by itself alone.



FIG. 50.

Incorrect use of the opposite rein (in this case the right) which instead of merely "pushing" the horse's shoulders to the left—neckwise guidance—is "attracting" his head to the right (the wrong side on which to carry it when turning to the left). The rider, furthermore, is not using his right leg as he ought to.



FIG. 51.

Correct use of the opposite rein (the right) which although "pushing" the horse's shoulders to the left is not "attracting" his head to the right. The rider is "seconding" the action of the reins by the proper use of the opposite leg (the right leg).

But if, even when combining it with the direct rein he uses it too harshly, or makes too long or too continuous a tension with it, he will thereby inevitably *pull* the

horse's head *to the left*, and consequently give his mount the *natural, logical* indication to turn *to the left, not to the right*. (Fig. 50.) In order then to avoid this the rider must strictly adhere to the instructions given in the next paragraph.

Following the principle enunciated elsewhere in this book that "a rein-action must be discontinued just as soon as it obtains the result it had been made for," the opposite rein-action being intended to *push* the shoulder, should be discontinued instantaneously, when such desired result shall have been obtained, *however small that result may have been*.

So: when the rider will feel the base of his mount's neck yield to the opposite-rein action, he may be confident that the animal's shoulder (and consequently his front feet) will follow it. He should therefore instantaneously cease the opposite-rein action, although making ready to repeat it if necessary; and he must cease it especially in view of the combined action of his opposite leg coming to its assistance, of which more anon.

But: as in order that the horse carry his rider to the exact point toward which the turning seeks to head him he must describe that turning completely, therefore: if the shoulder, although having yielded, has not yielded sufficiently for that turning to be complete, the opposite-rein action which had been discontinued in response to that initial slight yielding of the shoulder, should be repeated again, and if necessary again and again, *ad infinitum*, until the entirety of the desired turning has been completed; and it should then be repeated in conjunction with his opposite leg coming to its assistance. (Fig. 51.) In order to execute the opposite-rein action properly when carrying the reins in the second (or English) position, it is necessary that the hand thus employing

it be, just at that instant, thrust half an inch or so forward of the line of the other hand (toward the horse's neck) and brought closer to that other hand by means of a greater wrist-turn, while the other hand is executing the direction-rein action. When only one hand is used it must be thrust half an inch or so forward of the line of its original position, at the instant opposite-rein actions are brought into play, while the fingers holding the direct reins must be in a position to make the horse's mouth feel their influence.

By thus thrusting the opposite reins more loosely on his neck a freer rein-action being given the horse, it allows him a greater radius of movement for his front legs, and consequently a greater facility to turn, because the reins acting less on his mouth and more on his neck, fulfill more correctly their mission of opposition, on account of not pulling his head to their side. (*Fig. 51.*)

This point is insisted upon because so many, especially among novice-riders, have a tendency to pull the hand more or less backward—toward themselves—when making opposite-rein indications.

This hand-retraction effecting a rein-tension checks, as already said, the horse's movement forward, and prevents his forelegs from describing the fulness of the radial line without which he cannot turn—especially at sharp angles—either correctly, gracefully, or smoothly.

It will also be found that the horse will obey opposite-rein actions easier if the following two conditions are observed:

1st. If his head is slightly turned toward the side it is intended he should turn, and maintained in that direction while he is turning (*Fig. 51*);

2nd. If, simultaneously with the pushing of his *shoulder* by means of the rein, his *body* is pushed by the rider's

leg to the side to which it is intended he should turn. (*Fig. 51.*)

In order to fulfill the first of these conditions, the direct-rein must begin the indication to turn, previously to the opposite rein's use, and must continue acting in harmony with it during the entirety of the turning, the rider not omitting nevertheless to suspend its action on each of the horse's mouth-yieldings (*flexions*) as will be explained in the following chapter.

Thus the opposite rein-action must be suspended on each *neck*-yielding, while the direct rein-action will have to be suspended in response to each *mouth*-yielding.

The reader will no doubt begin to realize now what delicacy of hand-technique he will have to develop in order to execute with the proper definiteness—and later on swiftly—these suspensions of rein-actions, and especially their prompt resummptions, without yanking the horse's mouth, and consequently without interfering with the action of his legs, or upsetting his temper.

In order to fulfill the second of these conditions—pushing the horse's body conjointly with his shoulders—the rider has only to use the opposite leg on the animal's flank, while he is making use of the opposite rein on his neck, so that, by pushing the horse's body by means of the leg-action towards the side he intends him to turn, he completes in his mount's flank and hind-quarters the results already obtained on his forepart by means of the rein-indications. (*Fig. 51.*)

In order to do this the leg may be used in either of the two following ways: with more or less gentle "tap-taps" if—as already explained—the horse lags or manifests a tendency to lag; or with a more or less firm pressure—according to the animal's temperament and training—if no lagging occurs nor seems intended by the horse—

that pressure acting as a push. As in rein-actions, both "tap-taps" and pressure must be suspended or discontinued as soon as the horse obeys.

It may further be stated that the proper use of the legs notably diminishes the necessity for using the reins even on an insufficiently trained horse—not on a green one, of course—and eliminates that necessity completely on a perfectly trained and finished animal, for the proper management of which, at different stages of his education, more intricate and artistic manners of using the legs will be explained in the books following this one.

So while the novice-rider will have to study and observe all the foregoing details of hand-work, the advanced rider will have very little rein-action to use in order to turn, or otherwise govern the horse; and the expert-rider will require no hand at all to do these self-same things—and many more—because of his ability to have his mount execute them in obedience to leg-indications only, and then to leg-indications of the most refined sort.

CHAPTER X

THE HORSE'S MOUTH-LIGHTNESS

All horsemen, and most laymen, know that one of the greatest qualities in a horse, whether he be a saddle or a driving horse, is lightness of mouth. Without this great quality a horse is not easily controlled, and may soon become uncontrollable. This condition besides being dangerous as much for his rider (or driver) as for the people who may find themselves in his path, affords little or no pleasure to the person who handles him: a hard-mouthed animal. (Exceptionally there are people apparently devoid of artistic sense, or perhaps even of fineness of feeling, who enjoy riding or driving hard-mouthed horses!)*

Speaking for and about people with normal tastes: everybody prefers a light-mouthed, easily handled, horse, to the other kind. But, just as the best and most efficiently built machinery will deteriorate and break down long before it ought to, if not properly cared for, or if handled by people who are ignorant of its mechanism; just as the finer and more delicate machinery requires, more than the other sort, being cared for and handled by experts; so the well-trained horse requires to be handled by people who know how to do so properly, if

* Because of having to secure themselves by hanging on to the reins, some beginners, as also those who have been incorrectly or insufficiently taught, prefer riding hard-mouthed horses. They usually find out,—always too late, of course,—how dangerous this predilection may prove to be, and how much better it would have been for them to get cured of their defects by proper instruction.

the excellence of his training has to be anything like maintained. Consequently, just as people have to study in order to learn how to make proper use of complicated machinery, so those who wish to make proper use of a horse have to learn how to handle him in order that he should not deteriorate. (This is so because the horse is usually as complicated as any piece of machinery; and



FIG. 52.

Horse pulling.

exceptionally, a high-strung and sensitive animal presents, on account of his wide-awake brain, and sensitive nerves, problems to be instantaneously solved which the most intricate piece of machinery cannot possibly offer.)

In order then to keep a light-mouthed horse's mouth in good condition—and with still better reason in order to improve any horse's mouth—it is absolutely necessary that an interested person should learn what occurs to it

when it becomes light, or hard, as well as how the irons that govern it—snaffle and curb—work and have to be worked, in order to maintain, or to develop, as the case may be, mouth-lightness.

A horse is hard-mouthed in two different ways. If leaning on the curb he pokes the head straight out, at a normal or supernormal height, he is said to “pull.” (*Fig.*



FIG. 53.

Horse boring.

52.) If on the contrary he lowers the head while leaning on the curb, he is said to “bore.” (*Fig. 53.*)

Whether he “pulls,” or whether he “bores,” the relation of the horse’s mouth to the irons, especially to the “bit,” (or “curb”), is the same: *he leans on it with the jaw.* In order then not to pull (or bore), it is necessary that, when the horse feels the rider’s (or driver’s) hand-action, transmitted through the reins, instead of *leaning* on the curb (and snaffle), he *abandons instantaneously and completely all hold on them by retracting the jaw.*

The lightest-mouthed horse is therefore the one who executes the most promptly that jaw-retraction in response to his rider's slightest touch. (*Fig. 54.*)

However light his mouth by reason of conformation, no horse makes this jaw-retraction without its being



FIG. 54.

Same horse as in Figs. 52 and 53 but flexed: jaw retracted and neck suppled; up-to-the-bit by reason of having the forward-movement, technically termed "collected." Compare the foregoing, and the position of his legs "at support," with Figs. 52 and 53 and with Figs. 68 and 69, showing "horses in action" but with "movement backward."

taught him. It is on the contrary a good point for an untrained horse to be, more or less, a "puller." A habitual borer being often such because of incorrect equilibrium through defective conformation, as may be also through overwork of his front legs, he is apt to be less good than a puller.

Nevertheless "borers" are sometimes found also among good, ambitious, horses, but they are mostly met among lazy, worthless, brutes. They are consequently not, as a rule, in the same class as pullers. Most pullers, if not all of them, are such, because of their energy, their activity, their ambition to go. All these are qualities which exist only in the good horse. Consequently "pulling" is the defect of these qualities; and it is only an "unsurmountable defect," for the people unfortunate enough not to know how to overcome it, or when it is, unfortunately, accompanied by lack of temperamental balance. When a horse, as already stated, retracts the jaw and releases his hold on the curb, in response to his rider's (or driver's) rein-touch, he is said to "flex." As this is the primordial, *essential* condition of training for a horse, and especially for a saddle-horse, it is called "*the flexion.*" This name is given it because: although there are other flexions, of head, neck, haunches, and even of shoulders, as will be explained in the books following this one—none of them are complete, therefore none are advisable, unless *preceded*, and *accompanied*, by this primordial, essential one, *the flexion of the jaw*.

(As this article is meant to deal not with the case of training a horse, but with the teaching a novice-rider, the details of how to overcome various resistances which may be, and often are, offered by untrained horses will not be given in this book.) The horse's usefulness being manifest principally when he moves; the necessity for controlling (and guiding) him easily is therefore greatest while he is moving; the ease with which we may be able to control (and guide) him being relative to the degree of his light-mouthedness; it is logical that *the horse must be light-mouthed when in motion*. Consequently: the faster he goes the lighter he should become, which is the

contrary of what usually occurs. What usually occurs is that the faster a horse goes the harder-mouthed he becomes. While this seems logical at first blush, all the students of this Method—which may be termed the “Revised Baucher Method”—have recognized how illogical it really is for those who have the proper knowledge and how dangerous it becomes for those who “do not know.”

This is so because, the faster a horse goes the quicker he approaches danger points or obstacles which it is necessary to make him avoid or negotiate quickly and easily. When therefore the faster a horse goes the harder mouthed he becomes, the more difficult it is for his rider to make him avoid, or properly negotiate, the dangerpoints or obstacles he so quickly approaches.

When, on the contrary, the faster he goes the lighter-mouthed he becomes, the easier it is for his rider to control and guide him, and thus make him avoid, or, as the case may be, negotiate properly, those selfsame danger points and obstacles.

The novice-rider must then firmly impress on his mind: *that the horse must be light-mouthed especially when in movement; that the horse's light-mouthedness is obtained by means of the flexion; and that in order that he be light-mouthed in movement, the flexion must be obtained from him in and by the movement forward; consequently that mouth-lightness-flexion, and movement forward are, and should always be, synonymous in the mind of man and must be rendered equally synonymous to the horse.*

In order then to gain this inestimable knowledge, and especially to reach ultimate perfection in execution, the novice must first learn to make the horse flex on foot. Being thus on his natural basis—his feet—instead of an

artificial basis such as he has when seated on a horse's back, he is in a better position to appreciate and eventually acquire the delicacy and precision of touch so absolutely necessary for the obtention of a correct flexion. He, moreover, can learn it more easily because of being undisturbed by the horse's motions or by any other sort of apprehension about displacing his mount, or displacing himself on his mount's back, etc.

He can also while on foot very much better see the results of his hand-action than he possibly could while on horseback, excepting if he were to lean over so much as to be practically out of the saddle. After that, when in the saddle, he must apply himself to "feel" and not "see" the results he is obtaining by his hand-actions, which he will more readily be able to appreciate when he will have already ocularly familiarized himself with them while on foot. So: the rider being on foot at the horse's left—or "near"—shoulder, will be prepared to take the snaffle, and curb, reins, one in each hand, in a certain way, the reasons for which follow. (*Fig. 55.*)

As has already been said: *the horse must be light-mouthed while in the movement forward. That is absolutely essential*; and it must be *emphatically* added that: *the movement forward must always be present in anything the horse does, is requested to do, or is made to do*. This rule holds even when the horse is made to "back"; this proposition will seem a preposterous antithesis, but is notwithstanding absolutely true, and is more easily understood, once executed, than it is explainable. Nevertheless, as clear as possible an explanation of this seeming untruth will be attempted later on.

But: to return to the study of the flexion. It is comprehensible that, if nothing is done to the contrary, on feeling the pressure of the irons on his jaw consequen-

tial to a hand-action from his rider on foot, the horse will displace himself *backward*, rather than go *forward*. Something then must necessarily be done to obtain this so absolutely necessary "movement forward" simultaneously with the flexion sought by the rider's hand-action. With this in view, the means whereby this complex effect is obtained must be studied; and this compels



FIG. 55.

Preparing to seek flexions from on foot.

an explanation of the distinct manners of acting possessed by the snaffle and the curb when in the horse's mouth.

There are three lines of action—or manners of acting—which the snaffle has while the rider is on foot, the two last of which only are possible also when he is on horse-back.

1st. The movement forward: By stretching the snaffle-rein toward the front of the horse's head, the rider gives

it the "forward" line of action. (This snaffle-rein action cannot be effected when the rider is on horseback.)

2nd. The elevation: By lifting the snaffle-rein more or less perpendicularly from the horse's mouth, the rider develops, whether he be on foot or on horseback, the action of "elevation."

3rd. The check: By making a tension of the snaffle-rein backward of the horse's head—say toward the line of the saddle-seat (therefore more or less toward where his hands would be were he on horseback), the rider makes the snaffle act as a *check*. (This check-action is small, as compared to the similar action the curb develops.)

The "curb," although a more complicated affair, especially when with the chain on, possesses fundamentally only one action; the "check." Artificially, it conveys other meanings to the horse's mouth; and the more expert, the more artistic, the rider, the greater the number of meanings he is thereby able to transmit to his mouth. However that may be, these are nothing but more or less tactful, refined, artistic, modifications of the fundamental "check," which is the curb's *only* action.

It is then logical that, in order to simultaneously obtain the "movement forward," and the "flexion," the rider, while on foot, must develop the forward movement by means of the only iron which possesses this action, the snaffle, while at the same time he uses the curb in the one and only way it can be used, whether on foot or on horseback.

An explanation must now be given of what is meant by the "movement forward." These two words do not necessarily mean that the horse must go away from where he is; nor do they mean that he must go faster

when he is already in motion, whether it be walking, trotting, cantering or galloping; they then simply mean in this case that he must, *while standing still*, have a forward motion of the body, like, for example, an individual ready to go, yet not moving from where he stands and then when moving he must display an increased forward motion of the body, without going faster therefor. All this constitutes another of those actions that are more readily understood once they have been executed, than it is possible to explain them.

Suffice it to say that *the movement forward is, and must be proportionate to what the horse is doing, or to what he is required to do*. Thus: when the horse walks, his movement forward is less than when he trots; when he trots it is less than when he canters; and when he canters it is less than when he gallops. (Excepting that, as stated in one of the immediately preceding paragraphs, we increase by artificial means his movement forward *without thereby increasing the rapidity of his gait*, which essentially artistic action is technically called "collection.") To return to the study of the flexion: as the movement forward then must be proportionate *only* to what is wanted of the horse; and as the portion of the horse the rider has to move in order to obtain the flexion while on foot is *only* the animal's *lower-jaw*; it is comprehensible that the action which he will have to obtain by means of the snaffle-rein will have to be very small, and that it will therefore have to be regulated with such delicate precision as to *influence the horse's lower-jaw only*.

In the case of a novice-rider (quite as much as in the case of a green horse), the curb-chain will have to be taken off, and of course the lip-strap unbuckled. Thus the novice-rider will not run the risk of injuring the

horse's mouth, while at the same time he will be able to see more clearly the results his handling of the reins will produce in it. (This is comprehensible because, being unhindered by chin-compression, it will move more freely, therefore more amply, consequently more visibly, especially to novice eyes.)

To this end: standing at the horse's left (or near) side, about between his head and his shoulder, the rider reversing the position of the snaffle's ring, will take this (left) snaffle-rein with the full left hand, placing its thumb *flat* on the *inner side* of the rein, and passing all the other fingers over the rein, onto its outer side, the tip of the thumb-nail and the top of the third knuckle of his index (forefinger) being then at the distance of an inch or so from the snaffle's ring, and forward of the horse's mouth. By drawing the snaffle-rein, thus held gently though steadily forward, with a well-measured tension, he will act on the horse's head so as to draw it forward in such wise as to provoke a small, yet visible, forward, extension of the top of his neck (cervical region). (*Fig. 56.*) (It is useless to say that: *the gentleness of the primordial rein-action, and its slow graduation, already insisted upon elsewhere, with respect to all rein-actions, must be still more strictly observed in the study of the flexions.*)

At the same time that he takes hold of the snaffle-rein, the rider will take hold of the left curb-rein, with the *full right* hand; but he will take hold of it with a hand position the reverse of his left hand's. Thus he will place the right thumb, flat, on the *exterior* side of the left curb-rein, and pass all the other fingers over the rein so that they be on its interior side. The hold on this rein—as in the case of the snaffle-rein—will be effected by the thumb and forefinger, with the tip of the thumb-nail, and



FIG. 56.



FIG. 57.

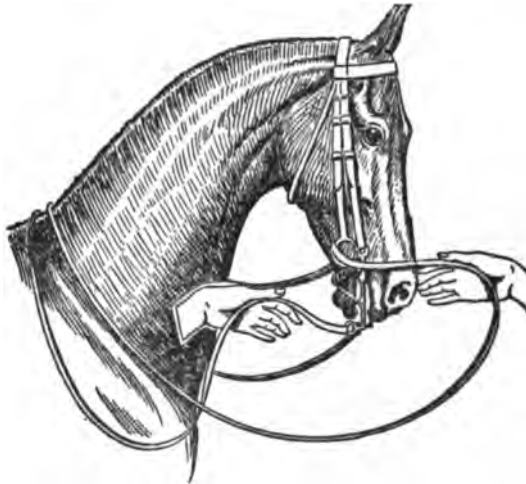


FIG. 58.

FIGS. 56-58.—THREE PHASES OF FLEXION.

56. Forward-movement of head (and neck) by means of snaffle-rein tension. (Curb not yet used.)
 57. Curb-rein also used, jaw beginning to move and neck to yield.
 58. Flexion complete: curb dangling in the mouth; neck flexed; reins floating.

the top of the index (or forefinger) at a distance of about an inch or so from the curb's ring.

When the necessary movement forward of the horse's cervical-region will have been obtained, by means of the snaffle-rein, in other words: when his head will have been extended just enough to involve the lower-jaw—an operation which according to conditions, may vary in time from one second to one minute—the rider will make a tension—at the start exceedingly soft—with the curb-rein, so as to draw the horse's lower-jaw backward and make him open the mouth. This curb-rein-action will thus be identical to the one he would make it execute were he on horseback. (*Fig. 57.*)

With the opening of the mouth, the horse will, of necessity, eventually *have* to relinquish his hold on the curb, and the "flexion" will have been obtained. (*Fig. 58.*)

But while the action of the curb-rein must be such as to obtain a sufficiently wide separation of the horse's jaws, it must not be overdone, and therefore the poor animal's mouth must not be opened unnaturally wide. Besides which, too much curb-rein action would induce the movement backward, that must not be permitted, still less caused.

In order to avoid this excess, it is advisable, when the curb-rein has separated the jaws to a certain extent, that, if necessary, a further tension be made with the snaffle-rein, and not with the curb-rein, *especially if a more or less strong resistance against the rein-action is offered by the horse*, or if he threatens to back. Therefore, if this resistance is offered, it will have to be overcome, *not by a movement backward*, that an increased curb-action would necessarily develop, but *by a movement forward*, obtained by a more marked snaffle-action. The result

nevertheless will be the same, because the flexion will have been obtained by the increased tension of the curb-rein *consequential to the greater forward movement* of the horse's head (and neck), elicited by the traction of the snaffle-rein.

Thus it will be seen that from the start, the *flexion is obtained by means of a movement forward*; that the slightest attempt at backing must be anticipated and parried by an increased tension forward of the snaffle-rein; and consequently, that flexions and light-mouthedness are *not*, as some people believe, detrimental to that *very* essential requisite: the movement forward, but are, on the contrary, the direct and logical consequences of, and the best auxiliaries to, the movement forward.

The more the rider will have to increase the rein-action the more will his hands have to turn—nails upward, as when he is on horseback—and the more his wrists will have to flex, possibly to an even greater degree than when he is on horseback, because when on horseback he will be able to obtain the movement forward—and consequently the flexion, as we have seen—by means of the legs. Following the rule that: "every rein-action must be suspended when the reason for which it had been effected ceases to exist," the rider must release *all* rein-tension as soon as ever the horse *lets go of his hold on the irons*—in other words: as soon as he flexes. This yielding of the rein-tension he will have to make, when the horse's *jaw releases its hold on the curb, must be as instantaneous, and as complete*, as when the horse responds to a rein-action from on horseback. *And both reins, curb and snaffle, must in both cases, on foot as on horseback, be as completely released the one as the other*, or else the flexion, instead of rendering the horse light-mouthed, will teach him to pull or to bore.

Special attention is called to this point because, whether through inadvertence or lack of coordination in their hand motions, many persons, though responding in correct time to the flexion, fail to completely yield the snaffle-rein, —or perhaps both snaffle-reins, if they are on horseback, —and thus induce the horse to lean on it and pull again.

Still more while he is on foot than when on horseback, the rider must be very careful *not to stiffen the biceps in the least* when seeking this, or any other, flexion, not only on account of most of the reasons personal to him, already enumerated elsewhere, but especially in order not to induce the horse's neck to stiffen in sympathy with his arm-stiffening, as demonstrated on page 113. On close inspection of the results obtained by his hand-actions, while on foot the rider will see that, as long as the horse is not relaxing his hold on the curb (not flexing) and, with still greater reason when he is offering a real resistance, otherwise: pulling, the lower-jaw, although possibly separated quite widely from the upper one, is nevertheless so "stuck" on the curb, that the "bar" of this iron is actually imbedded in the tongue.

As soon as the horse "flexes," and consequently as soon as he relaxes his hold on the curb, the rider will see that its "bar" will be more or less detached from the horse's tongue and lower-jaw—to the extent of being *absolutely free from any contact with any part of the animal's mouth*—and that it will therefore be literally dangling in the air, at a distance from either jaw, of sometimes more than half an inch, according to the animal's jaw-conformation, and to its flexibility. (*Fig. 58.*)

It is then comprehensible that when this occurs, the weight of the horse's mouth on the rider's hand becomes *nil*, which is the "summum bonum" to be constantly

sought, and obtained at all times, at all gaits (Fig. 59), and under all circumstances. (Fig. 28.) With this aim in view the rider must always try to obtain each consecutive flexion by means of lighter and lighter hand-actions. If he does not attend to this successfully, not only will he impair the horse's light-mouthedness, but he will also fail to improve his own delicacy of touch, fineness of feeling, and keenness of perception.

As far as the impairment of the horse's light-mouthedness is concerned, if the rider does not try to obtain flexions—or in fact anything at all—with lighter and still lighter hand-actions, the horse may flex, of course, or otherwise obey, but, as he will always be accustomed to do so in response to only the same strength of hand, or intensity of action, he will never become finer, never improve. (Eventually, following the universal law of transformation, as it will not have been improving, his mouth will deteriorate; he will then become more or less hardmouthed, and, according to his temperament and other circumstances, possibly even unmanageable . . . or perhaps prematurely crippled.)

The best way for a novice to learn making a horse flex, if an instructor is available, is that he, and not the novice, should obtain some flexions first, while the learner looks at this work from all angles, that is to say: not only by trying to detect what is occurring in the horse's mouth, but also by analyzing what the teacher is doing with the hands; how he holds them; how he manoeuvres them, in response to, or in accordance with, which of the horse's mouth-motions, etc.

When he will *think* he has *seen* enough, then the learner will hold the teacher's two hands (each with the one of his own hands corresponding with them, left hand on the teacher's left hand, and right hand on his right

hand), placed on them *exactly* as the teacher holds the reins with his.

The learner must hold the teacher's hands firmly—although not squeezing them so as to hamper their action—because by holding them thus firmly he will be still better able to appreciate the quality of their action, and the entirety of their “modus operandi”; and he will also realize how *little* strength is required to obtain the flexion.

When he thinks he has realized all he can by this means, the learner will take the reins, *but will not be allowed as yet to act with them*. The teacher will then, either by placing himself behind or beside him, *take hold of*, and *actually obtain the flexion through, the learner's hands*, who will thus be able to realize things still better.

When it will be thought that the learner can attempt to obtain flexions alone, he will be allowed to do so, the teacher correcting him if he detects the least little imperfection or especially any excess of strength, etc., in his efforts.

Until the teacher is quite sure of the learner's using discretion, he will observe him closely, whether in the study of this, or of any other flexion, because it is as superlatively essential that the learner acquire “good hands,” and *complete flexibility* of hands, wrists, and arms, while working with them, as it is that he acquire good body position.

A means of more completely appreciating the excess of strength the learner may make is for the teacher to (once in a while, whenever he considers it advisable) take the horse's reins on the opposite side of the pupil's, and attempt obtaining a flexion from the horse simultaneously with him.



Photo by Stanger.

FIG. 54.—"CUTBACK."

Property of Capt. Richard A. Smith, U. S. A., and former owner of the
 American and English breeds. Capt. Smith has won many
 seasons' championships in the U. S. A. and has won
 3 times. The photograph is a reproduction of the
 only hand-drawn by a page of Mr. J. G. Smith.

A teacher—and his *conscientious* learner—will find this advice very advantageous. Some people believe that constant flexing tires the horse! If flexing were gymnastics, and caused an increase of the horse's exertions, this constant increase would, inevitably, use him up, just as it occurs with people who over-do athletic work.

But, as flexing a horse amounts to nothing else than "suppling" him, and teaches him to relax his muscles while in activity, far from representing an "increase" of exertions, it amounts effectively to a "decrease" of them. Therefore: when he has learnt how to flex properly, a horse is actually less tired after having gone through a given amount of work, than he would have been, had he done that same work without knowing how to flex.

It occurs, of course, that at the beginning of their instruction in flexing—as in anything else—many horses offer such resistance to their rider's rein, or other appeals, however tactfully these may be effected, that they actually overwork themselves, sometimes disproportionately to the quantity and sort of work given them. For example: such a horse may be only walking for half an hour, and still be more or less profusely sweating—especially perhaps on the neck and shoulders—in consequence of the resistance he is offering to his rider's flexion-appeals. But, when he will have learnt to flex properly, and will offer no more resistance, he will be able to work double that time at the walk, trot, and canter, and be probably able to do many other more interesting and difficult things, without being anything like half as warm, and perhaps not half as tired.

Just as people enjoy more doing a thing, and consequently come to love it more, when they have learnt to do it with limberness and complete muscular relaxation,

so horses work with greater pleasure and zest, when once they have learnt to work with relaxed muscles, in other words, when they have learnt to flex.

So it comes to pass that after a while, horses thus worked like their flexions so much, that they flex on the slightest demand, and eventually *flex of their own accord, without any demand*, this being *the one and only thing riders must allow them to do, without let or hindrance, of their own free will*.

To return to the study of the flexion on foot: When the rider has obtained a few, say three or four, *satisfactory* flexions on one side of the horse, he must pass to his other side, and flex him there. In connection with this the following advice should be heeded:

When passing from the horse's one side to the other, the rider must not abandon the reins, because the horse may get frightened or excited, or may wish to play just at that moment, and thus get away from him. This is always disagreeable for the man, besides suggesting to the horse the possibility of escape from control. (Horses love liberty as much as humans.) To avoid this, being on the horse's left side and wishing to pass to his right, the rider must take the *left* snaffle-rein with the *right* hand; then pass in front of the horse facing him; then take the *right* snaffle-rein with his *left* hand; and when he has reached the horse's other side (the *right* side), he will take the *right* snaffle-rein with the *right* hand, and the *right* curb-rein with the *left* hand, and start flexing the horse on this new side, just as he has already flexed him on the other.

(It must be added that before passing from one side to another it is advisable that the rider give a little token of appreciation to the horse, patting him softly, about the neck—preferably close to the head. If this were a

case of training, it would be more than merely advisable, *absolutely necessary*, for him to reward the horse.)

Once on the horse's other side the rider will find there is a difference in the resistance, or flexibility, between one side and the other, which, if this were a case of training the horse, would compel him to work the animal's mouth more on the difficult side than on the easier one.

But, as the case is now that of teaching the rider, he will flex the horse from the side on which he himself experiences more difficulty to do so, whether this difficulty be in realizing the degree of sensitiveness of the animal's mouth; or in suppling his own biceps; or in turning one of his wrists; or anything at all; regardless of the horse's mouth-inequalities. (The difference alluded to in the horse's resistance or flexibility, does not exist only with respect to his mouth, but exists also with respect to his gaits; as for example in the preference he shows to use one leg or set of legs, rather than the other, etc.; and this last difference may exist without being caused by any blemish or any crippled condition.

These differences, however, are not perceptible in well-trained horses, whose training is completed with fineness of finish, especially if they are also sound, and well conformed. But these highly trained horses are precisely the ones that can be spoiled the most easily and quickly by riders not of their standard of excellence . . . which is another reason for riders to try to improve their hand-technique by the study of the flexion.)

The flexion just described is the First Baucher flexion, or, as already said, "the flexion." (Were this the case of training a horse it might not be the first flexion attempted on him, if, for example, he offered an apparently unsurmountable resistance against opening the mouth; but as this aims at the teaching of a novice rider and not at the training of

a horse, the description of those other, possibly first, flexions, and of others with which to complement, if necessary, the flexions described herein will be given elsewhere.)

The Second Baucher flexion is practically identical with the first with the difference that the curb-hand—whether right or left—instead of holding one curb rein, only, holds *both* curb reins at the same time, while the snaffle-rein is being used by the other hand in the same way as for the first flexion.

The reason for using the two curb-reins in this flexion is that: as the horse, excepting when absolutely well-trained, does not pull equally on both sides, and very often shifts his pull from side to side while resisting against the flexion-appeal, it is necessary that these differences, even when merely momentary, be instantly corrected. To this effect, in this Second Baucher flexion both curb-reins are used simultaneously by the simple means of taking these two reins full handedly, yet with each one enabled to act separately, as may be necessary, by the observance of the following:

The rider will pass the curb-hand's arm (whether right or left, according to the side he stands, first *under* the snaffle-rein—held, as already said, by the other hand, like for the first flexion—then the curb hand *over* the two curb-reins, holding them both at an equal, short distance from the curb's rings, and on a horizontal line behind the horse's chin. (The distance from the horse's chin will be regulated by the rider's facility in handling the reins, and obtaining the flexion.)*

* The reason for the rider's passing the curb-hand *under* the snaffle-rein is that, if he were not to do this, and the horse were to back, or rear, his arm would be imprisoned, as a result of the catch, by the snaffle-rein, and would thus be rendered impotent. The conjecture of the horse's rearing is a remote one, never to be expected from a horse such as the learner will undoubtedly be handling; but if, nevertheless, he does not acquire the habit of

Then quite as much in order to realize the difference in resistance, or resiliency, that each side of the horse's mouth may present, as in order to readily and quickly act on them, the rider will place his curb-hand's forefinger between the two curb-reins. If the horse is *very* hard-mouthed he may put the forefinger and the medium between those reins—the thumb being laid *flat* on the rein's side facing him, and the other fingers on the other rein's outer side. The finger, or fingers, placed between the reins will thus be lying on the *flat* of the inner-side of each of the two curb-reins. Thus also: by turning the thumb—and consequently the nails—*downward*, he will act on the curb-rein *closest* to him; and by loosening slightly the medium (or the two fingers) between the reins he will relax the tension on the curb-rein *farthest* from him.

And, when he will have in turn to use that rein (the one farthest from him), he will effect its tension by turning the medium and the other fingers (and nails) inward, toward the palm of his hand, while a slight lengthening of his thumb and forefinger will release the curb-rein closest to him. It will then be comprehensible that by the very fact of learning to synchronize the movements of his fingers and hands with the rapid shift of the horse's "pull" from side to side, and of his having to appreciate to a nicety the sometimes very faint differences presented in such cases by each side of the horse's mouth, the novice will not only refine his sense of tact, but will also wonderfully improve the technique of his hands, wrists and fingers.

The time necessary for the acquiring of this technique doing these things correctly so that he eventually does them thus instinctively, just at the time he might come in contact with such a rearing horse he might also omit executing them equally well, and would then realize,—too late,—how good it is to *hold* them always with the proper technique.

can be very materially shortened if the novice has an Instructor—which is the best way to learn—and his arm-flexibility can also be better assured, or increased, as the case may be, by the observance of the following advice.

As soon as the learner will have begun to realize what the flexions are, and what they signify both to himself and to the horse, and will, therefore, have started obtaining flexions in person, the Instructor will, occasionally, stand behind him, and seizing both his *arms* one in each hand press down any biceps-stiffening the learner may develop while seeking the flexion.

The teacher will do this especially when he sees the horse resisting, and if he realizes that having to make a little more effort with the reins, or to “sustain” their action a little longer, the learner may be tempted to use the biceps, in addition to the hands and wrists, a temptation which few of us have not yielded to some time or other. This should be promptly combated because of the negative, stiffening response it provokes from the horse’s neck-muscles, as demonstrated in another section of this book.

There are two other flexions—called Flexions of Elevation—which ought to be taught the novice now; but in order that he learn to execute them with the greatest chance of success, it is advisable that, before attempting them, his arms be as flexible as they can be rendered (in so short a time), so that he have the greatest possible control over them. We will treat now of some exercises (instead of those flexions) which he ought to take in order to attain the so beneficent desiderata of arm-flexibility.

If, however, the learner has by nature very flexible arms, which is often the case with ladies, he will be able to take up these Flexions of Elevation immediately.

CHAPTER XI

FLEXIONS TO GAIN GREATER CONTROL OF THE ARMS

One of the necessary conditions for improving the quality of a rider's hands, and especially for his acquiring that most essential requisite called "good hands," is for him to have perfect control of his arms.

Perfect arm-control cannot be obtained without arm-relaxation and requires of necessity great flexibility of the muscles of the back, from the top of the shoulder-blades to the seat, whereby is increased the torso lightness and consequently decrease of its topheaviness is also effected. Arm-flexions are necessary to obtain those results and being thus as much cause as effect the novice-rider should start studying them as soon as he gains a little confidence while on the back of his moving horse.

Riders whose conformation is not good (for example the round-shouldered), those who have a tendency to spinal-deviation, or those whose seat-muscles are too developed, should start these exercises sooner, and they ought to practice them oftener, and keep them up longer, than others. Young folks ought to do the same, especially those who are inclined not to sit upright and to slouch when walking, or in other pursuits of life.

Amateur riders ought to practice them once in a while, even long after they believe not requiring to do so any more, because these flexions being what scales and exercises are to Pianists, Violinists and other

Instrumentalists, people who ride only an hour a day—and consequently still more so those who ride less than that—ought to practice them with the greatest assiduity in order to make up by their means for the little time they are able to devote to horseback-riding . . . that is: if they care to ride as well, and as relaxed as possible.

These arm-exercises ought to be executed first on foot; then on the horse standing still; then on the horse walking; then on the horse trotting, at first trotting slowly, then trotting a little faster.

DIRECT ARM-FLEXION

The first of these flexions is the "Direct Arm-flexion," so called because when executing it the arm is extended *straight ahead* of the rider's shoulder.

It is done as follows:

The rider being squarely seated on horseback, with torso erect—but *not rigid*—will put all the reins in one hand, dividing them between the fingers as at the moment of mounting. He will then lift the free arm and extend it horizontally, *fist clenched*, straight ahead of the shoulder. (Fig. 60.) When doing this he must pay attention *not to lift the shoulder* simultaneously, but to *keep it strictly on its normal level and consequently on the same level as the other shoulder*. He will then *stiffen the fist and arm forward*, and *simultaneously stiffen the shoulder, and shoulder-blade backward*, nevertheless *not pushing it visibly farther back than the other shoulder's and shoulder-blade's line*. (Fig. 61.)

The movement of the shoulder and shoulder-blade must consequently be an interior one: *actually under the*

skin. When he will have thus stiffened this arm, shoulder, and shoulder-blade and maintained them a few seconds in this condition, *without stiffening any other part of the body*—which will at first prove a rather difficult proposition but will later become less and less difficult—he will completely relax these self-same parts, *without in any way altering their position*; and after

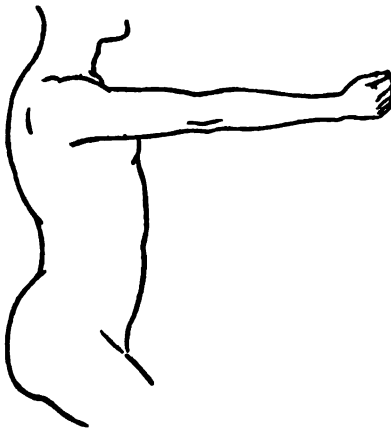


FIG. 60.

Direct arm-flexion.

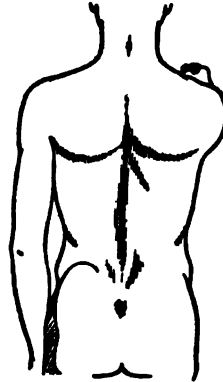


FIG. 61.

Back-view of direct arm-flexion. Notice that both shoulders are on the same level; notice also flattening of shoulder-blade while arm is extended and fist clenched.

having satisfied himself of having obtained their complete relaxation, he will bring back the arm to its normal position—and repeat this flexion twice or thrice.

He will then pass the reins from the other hand to this one, and execute the same exercise with that other limb.

WAY OF PASSING ONE-HAND-HELD REINS FROM ONE
HAND TO THE OTHER

When the reins are held in one hand only, and it is desired to pass them from one hand to the other, the best way to execute the movement is the following: Turn the hand holding the reins so that its nails are downward. Pass the free hand in front of the rein-holding hand, with fingers extended, each one at the height of its contrary,* in the other hand, until the reins are deep in between the fingers, at their junction with the hand—and the trick is done. The hand that formerly held the reins having thus become the free hand, will help regulate the length of the reins in the new rein-holding hand.

If the rider is carrying a riding-whip, it would then be better for him to do without it.

BACKWARD ARM-FLEXION

This flexion is made by passing the "free" arm behind the back, and as far as possible towards the opposite side of the seat. The fist must be closed—as in the previous arm-flexion—the arm stiffened, and first lowered perpendicularly along the rider's torso, and the horse's flank; then it must be bent at the elbow, *and without the rider's lifting the shoulder*, must be brought behind the back, the fist lying on its back, behind the rider's back (*Fig. 62*), and once it is there all the shoulder and arm-muscles must be stiffened. In order to be complete this flexion should cause a tension of the muscles of the arm,

* Meaning that the index of one hand will be in front of the little finger of the other; the medium in front of the annulary; the other annulary in front of the other medium; and the little finger in front of the other index.

of the shoulder, of the shoulder-blade, of the half of the breast (all on the flexing arm's side), of the loins and of both halves of the seat. When this tension will have been forced to the extent the rider can, he ought also to feel the tension in the muscles of the seat on the opposite side of the arm he is flexing. He will then relax completely, and bring back the hand to normal position.



FIG. 62.

Backward flexion of the arm.

The shoulders must not move, and the waist must not twist, during this flexion, because if they did, the movement of the one, or the twist of the other, or both, would annul the effect aimed at by the flexion.

Repeat twice or thrice, and pass the reins from one hand to the other, as for the previous arm-flexion, and so forth. Besides the benefits previously mentioned that are derived from the practice of these exercises, the "backward arm-flexion," especially, increases firmness

of seat in the saddle, which, naturally, gives greater assurance and confidence while riding on horseback.

This arm-flexion is excellent for still further improving the necessary qualities of the torso, and will also be found especially good for novices whose seat's muscular development is very prominent.

People thus conformed experience difficulty in keeping their torso perfectly erect, when riding on horseback (that is to say with a straight line behind them from saddle to space), because when they want to straighten the torso they round the chest forward, and sway the back into a forced curve, which makes their seat poke backward awkwardly.

Besides being and looking strained, and ungraceful, this causes the extremity of their seat to lift out of the saddle which, added to the topheaviness of their torso, is apt to leave them very indifferent riders, unless these untoward conditions are worked against energetically, and conscientiously, from as near the start of their Equestrian career as possible.

TORSO-FLEXIONS

At any time that it may be considered necessary, that is, from their very first lesson in the case of naturally round-shouldered pupils, or of others who may require them for other reasons than round-shoulderedness; later, if these or other good reasons do not exist, "torso-flexions" ought to be practiced by learners in order to increase, to the greatest possible extent, the flexibility of the upper part of the body.

These exercises have not been mentioned previously because it has been thought advisable to embody them in the chapter where the arm-exercises would be explained,

there being no precise moment at which learners, as a whole, ought to practice them.

We can go further and say that some people, lithe, well-balanced, unafraid, and naturally flexible, practically do not require to practice them at all, unless they be aiming at High School work of a very finished order.

Alluding then to a novice-rider supposed to be learning without a teacher and only with the assistance of this book, and surmising that he requires to make these torso-flexions at some time of his Equestrian education, we will proceed to indicate how he ought to do them.

The horse, standing, will have to be held by a third party on foot, as the rider will completely abandon the reins and proceed to lie down, flat on the animal's back. In order to do this correctly, he must lean back squarely, that is, not by dropping one shoulder sooner, or more than the other, but, by *keeping them both constantly on the same level*. He must lean back *straight*, that is, not like so many are apt to do who bend the head either backward, or much oftener forward (*Fig. 63*), and thus have it very awkwardly poking out at a nearly straight angle from the neck either one way or the other.

He must then lean as if he were lying on a plank (*Fig. 64*) that would be lowered gradually until it reached the horse's back, or thereabouts. When the learner leans back, he must take care not to allow the legs—at the knees and thighs—to move upward, nor the lower-legs to go forward. (*Fig. 63.*) In order to prevent this he has only to *keep the heels low, with determination*. (This seems difficult at first, but, with practice, is eventually done easily.) The rider's arms can be kept along his sides, the hands near the knees; or they may be allowed to fall along the horse's flanks, "ad lib."

After having remained a few seconds with the torso

on a level plane, the rider will bring it back to vertical position, paying attention to do this *very slowly indeed*, in order to accustom his lumbar muscles to sustain the weight of his upper-structure easily while performing this flexion.

But, in order to get the full benefit of this flexion, he



FIG. 63.

Incorrect backward flexion of torso. Notice stiff nape of neck, curved trapeze, head poked forward, knee out of line of saddle, lack of balance.



FIG. 64.

Correct backward flexion of torso, as if lying on a lowering plank; legs in correct position: perfect balance and relaxation of the whole body excepting tension at the heel.

must take care, when returning to vertical position, *not to yield to the reaction* and consequently, not to allow his shoulders to go farther forward than they ought to, a tendency which every novice has, without exception, although each one has it, of course, to a greater or lesser degree. If he were to allow the shoulders to react too far forward, he would automatically defeat the flexion's

aim, by the rounding of the shoulders as well as by the lifting of the rear-end of the seat, consequential to round-shoulderedness.

If on the contrary he stops just where he ought to be in order to have the torso perfectly erect, this flexion, apart from limbering all the muscles of his back, especially the lumbar-muscles, and consequently decreasing still more any tendency he may have to topheaviness, will help him lower the seat in the saddle, and thus increase its firmness.

Either while leaning backward, or when returning to normal (erect) position, the rider must try to keep the torso always as flexible as possible, a thing which he will at first find very difficult to do. But he will overcome this difficulty more or less soon according to the extent of his natural flexibility, or to the degree of his persistence in practicing this flexion.

After he will have done this satisfactorily on the horse standing still, he will flex the torso while the horse walks. To this end, unless he has someone to ride by his side and control the horse for him, instead of abandoning the reins, he will simply prepare himself to let them slip through the fingers, while leaning backward. If, when leaning he did not allow the reins to slip, he would inevitably pull on the horse's mouth, and cause him to stop. Then, as both sides, of a beginner especially, are never as equally balanced, or as strong the one as the other, or equally well under control, one of his hands will inevitably pull more on the reins than the other, and cause the horse to swing around when stopping, either by turning the shoulders or by turning the haunches. This, besides unbalancing the rider would, by the very fact of the horse's stopping, negative the desired result, which is that of flexing the torso *at the walk*.

In the flexion of the torso at the walk, it is not necessary that the rider lean as far down backward, as when he is doing it on the horse standing still; if he leans back only half that much, it will be quite enough. (*Fig. 64.*) He must not only take care to return the torso to erect position quite as slowly as he did with the horse stopped, but also carefully observe the other conditions: non-reaction; squareness and evenness of shoulders; flexibility; *immobility of legs*, etc.

After he will have done this satisfactorily at the walk, the rider will flex the torso at the slow trot, or even at the jog (to begin with), and will observe all the rules set down for the torso-flexion at the walk, with the exception that, instead of leaning back *half-way*, as in the walk, he will begin by leaning *one quarter of the way* and then, possibly *one third of the way*, or, if he can, even *one half*, as in the walk. But that is not necessary for the purpose in view, which is that of rendering him able to lean quickly backward at other gaits than the walk, and in other cases of necessity. To this end: once he will have found it pretty easy to lean the torso backward at the trot, he will try to lean it only as low down as just below the shoulder blades.

Then, he will try to repeat each flexion of this kind a little closer to each other than he had done before, *without exaggerating the number of these repetitions*. Because if he were to exaggerate them, especially at first, he would inevitably mix himself up so in the attempts as to either displace the legs, or the arms, or both, which would make matters worse than if he had not tried these quick repetitions.

If he finds he cannot avoid these mix-ups, then he will only try to flex his shoulders back *quickly*, and bring them back *quickly* to erect position while paying also

careful attention to all the points previously warned against: retraction of the legs, etc.

It is superfluous to study these flexions at the Canter, because it is easy for a person to do them at this gait.

ROTARY FLEXION OF THE TORSO

This flexion's aim is to render easier the turning of the rider's torso from side to side. This flexion is helpful to all, but more so especially to Military riders who may some day have to sword-thrust at an enemy a little behind them, as well as to Polo-players for obvious purposes.

It must be executed like all the preceding flexions, first with the horse standing, then at the walk, trot and canter. This flexion has to be done at the canter also, because, when the horse is cantering on one foot (or lead) it is difficult, at first, for the rider to rotate the torso to the opposite side, without lifting out of the saddle the half of his seat on the side of the leading-foot; and so the very overcoming of this difficulty renders this flexion all the more advantageous for the rider who does it well at this gait.

As in order to execute this flexion it is absolutely necessary for the rider to abandon the reins, when learning to practice it while the horse is in motion, he will have to be accompanied by some capable and reliable rider who will guide and effectively control his horse for him. To perform this flexion, the rider will put both arms akimbo, holding the hands, palm flat on each hip. He then will twist the torso, *on the hips* (or *waist-line*), but *not* on the seat (which must consequently remain immovable), twisting it, *slowly* at first, to the right, and then to the left. As soon as he will have *positively* improved while doing it slowly he will very gradually execute it faster and faster.

But, as the study of these rotary flexions supposes a greater "accoutumance" on the saddle than a novice-rider can possibly possess he must execute them *only* after he will have learnt to walk, trot (and canter) without holding the reins, as will be explained in a following chapter.

While the torso is being flexed rotatorily, the rider must, as already said, take *very great care not to move the seat in the least*. If he did move it the value of this rotary flexion of the torso would be lost, in fact, it would then prove more detrimental than beneficial. This same warning applies to the following torso-flexion.

LATERAL FLEXION OF THE TORSO

By means of this flexion the rider will learn to lean the torso, as far as he can, to the right, and left, *without moving*, and especially *without lifting the seat*, from the side opposite the one he is leaning the torso to. The aims of this flexion are pretty nearly similar to those of the preceding flexion, and are useful to the same classes of riders, Military and Polo—mostly.

While executing them the learner must also be accompanied by a rider of similar standard, as already advised, and for the same reasons. He will do these flexions first with the hands and arms hanging along his sides, and then with the arms folded, at right angles from the elbows, *behind the back*, but *without concaving the back* in order to carry the arms thus. If he has any such tendency the rider must fold the arms in front of him, instead of behind, and hold the elbows pointing just a little outward. Were he in this case to keep the elbows close to the hips, he would have a cramped position around the waist, which would negative the suppling aim of this flexion, and might even prevent its accomplishment.



FIG. 65.—CORRECT FORWARD FLEXION OF THE TORSO (FOR A PRACTICAL PURPOSE).

Mrs. Herbert Wadsworth leaning shoulders forward, but without getting her seat off the saddle. (The horse apparently took-off too close to the fence, and is at the "pesade" or half-rear.)

This flexion must be effected by the torso *leaning* on one side and the other, like a bending reed, not like the mast of a ship. It must not be repeated quickly, the torso at first being simply made to go from side to side very slowly.

FORWARD FLEXION OF THE TORSO

This flexion being the antithesis of the erect position of the torso, and consequently the antithesis of the primordial condition for correct riding, it must be learnt—and then with great care, and without being indulged in—only by the very advanced rider, in fact, by the rider advanced enough to learn jumping.

It consists in convexing or leaning the back forward, *without in any way moving or lifting the seat*. Contrarily to what he will have done in the opposite flexion—the backward flexion of the torso—the rider must go *forward slowly* and return to the *erect position quickly*—without nevertheless leaning to such an extent backward as to react this way.

This flexion renders the back so resilient that, when the horse takes off (*Fig. 65*) at a high jump, or when he rears, the rider's back bends easily and automatically forward, but *without his seat leaving the saddle*.

While making this flexion, just as in all the other torso-flexions, the legs must not be influenced by the motions of the rider's torso, but must remain immovable, in the position "at rest," firmly, but not stiffly. To ensure this, the heels must be kept, strictly, on a lower level than the toes.

CHAPTER XII

FLEXIONS OF ELEVATION

When, as already said, the rider's arms have been rendered sufficiently flexible—or if they are sufficiently flexible by nature—he will be able to begin learning the flexions of elevation. The one of these flexions which is usually practised first, is effected as follows: The rider standing in front of the horse (*Fig. 34*), and holding one of the snaffle reins in each (full) hand—the *left* rein in the *right* hand and the *right* rein in the *left* hand—will place the animal's head at a normal height (that is at the height at which he holds it normally), and will stretch each rein horizontally, away from each of the animal's cheeks, until the snaffle bearing in his mouth with a certain tension, perhaps even strength if he weighs on it, he begins to move the (lower) jaw.

If, after a couple of seconds of the jaw's motion, the horse does not retract it and release his lean on the curb (in other words: "flex"), the rider will gradually increase the tension of the reins until the horse flexes, which he usually does shortly after that.

As soon as the horse flexes, the rider will, of course, completely, and instantaneously relax the tension of the reins, and as in the first and second flexions, allow the horse to flex a little of his own accord, before trying to obtain another flexion.

He will then seek a couple of other similar flexions at that same height, before proceeding to really elevate

the horse's head. If, after the first two or three initial attempts at this flexion, the horse does not respond—does not flex—the rider will then try the Pulley Flexion, explained in detail in the following chapter, which, very often, facilitates the obtention of the first flexion of elevation.

Surmising that the horse has more or less easily responded to the rider's initial attempts, he (the rider), after having obtained at this normal height the two or three good flexions alluded to, will proceed to heighten, gradually, the level of the animal's head. In order to be in a position to do this better, the rider must separate his own feet so as to stand on a firmer basis than he would have if he held them close to each other.

He has to stand on this elongated basis in order that, if it be necessary for him to move backward in consequence of the horse advancing a foot during the head-heightening process—as usually occurs—the fact of his feet being thus separated will enable him to react better than if they were close together. (*Fig. 34.*) This foot position will also enable him to effectively resist any attempt of the animal's at going backward, because he will then be able to attract him forward more easily, while he at *the same time is seeking and obtaining the flexion*, than if he were trying to accomplish this complex aim while standing on a smaller and therefore more precarious basis.

So: *on* obtaining a new flexion, the rider, while relaxing his tension on the reins, will elevate the hands, without pulling on the horse's mouth, and if the horse does not lift the head, in response to this elevative hand-action, a couple of "tremolos," (or trembling motions of the reins, preferably those of the side on which the horse bears the most, will obtain the desired result. This two-

fold action is easy of accomplishment, difficult though it seems in explanation).

As soon as the horse lifts the head, if only just a trifle, the rider will instantly, but without any jerky motion, stretch the snaffle-reins again, as already stated, and obtain another flexion, or two, with the horse's head at this new level. The rider will then proceed to obtain a still higher head level; this done, he will stop flexing

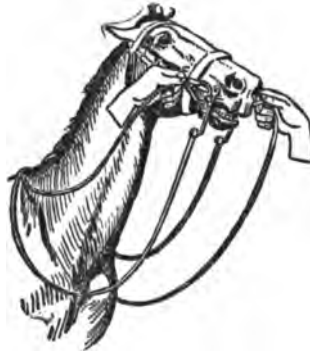


FIG. 66.

Flexion of elevation. Notice its result on basis of neck (near the withers).

thus for a while, or he may return to a direct flexion, or even allow the horse a little "breathing spell" (to collect his thoughts), by ceasing all action and allowing him to carry the head where he pleases, and extend the neck as much as he likes. [A few "breathing spells" tactfully interspersed during a lesson will be beneficial to both horse and rider, especially if either, and with more reason if both are learners. It has always seemed to me that after a breathing spell man and horse return to "business" with more interest or zest. Whether teaching or

training I make it a point to give both man and horse as many breathing spells as I can, and have never been sorry of following this policy.]

The rider will then start afresh, if possible from this slightly higher head-level, and so, from higher level to higher level he will eventually have the horse's head as high as he (the rider) can reach and obtain flexions at, with arms at full length. (*Fig. 66.*) The reason for first obtaining a flexion before each attempt at elevating the horse's head is because: it being easier to elevate a thing that has been previously lightened than when it is in its original state of heaviness, it is consequently advisable to lighten the horse's head by flexibilizing means before trying to elevate it to a higher level. It is also easier for the horse to lift the head when it is light than while it is heavy.

PULLEY-FLEXION

This flexion is a combination of the preceding "flexion of elevation," and of a flexion to bend the neck at the proper place: the crest.

Being a very powerful means of flexing, it must not be employed to excess, and it must also be attempted and executed with great tact and discretion.

The manner of obtaining it is as follows: The rider standing at the horse's left side—as when preparing for the direct flexion—will take the left snaffle-rein with the left hand, in the same way as he did for that flexion, excepting that he will not twist the snaffle-ring forward.

With the right hand's first three fingers he will first pass the right snaffle-rein over the top of the horse's head, and making it lie there, just behind the ears, will then take it with the full right hand at a point somewhere just above the middle of the horse's cheek. (*Fig. 67.*)

He will, thereafter, *simultaneously* push the left hand slowly *upward* while he will slide the right hand very slowly *downward*, along the horse's cheek, as if he wanted to make both hands meet. (Fig. 67.)

However gently he does act, *as he must*, he will provoke, by reason of this flexion, a gradually and increasingly powerful snaffle pressure on the junction of the animal's lips, which will *compel* the horse to open the



FIG. 67.

Pulley-flexion: hands going toward one another. Notice effect on cervical region (crest shaping.)

mouth, and thus to let go his jaw-lean on the curb: and the flexion will be obtained. Because of this flexion's power, demonstrated by its promptly compelling action, the rider's hands must relax their hold on the reins with still greater rapidity than when seeking any other flexion of the three thus far described.

To that end: as the horse relaxes his lean on the curb, the rider, *without moving the hands from the spot at which they may happen to be*, will *instantaneously open all the fingers, thumb and forefinger included*. In this

way, while *instantaneously* relaxing the rein-tension, the rider, by simply closing the fingers again if necessary, with the same rapidity as he had opened them (*but without any jerky action*) will be able to repeat his appeals for a second, and even a third flexion, one after another, if required. He will then, avoiding any rein-action, allow the horse to flex all he wants of his own accord, which is what the animal usually does.

But in this flexion, if possible more than in the others, the tact of the hands, the flexibility of the wrists and forearms, and *especially the lightness of the arms*, must be *strictly* observed.

By the study of this flexion the rider's *fingers* especially will be rendered deft; and the great attention he will have to pay that every inch of his upper-limbs, including the hands, be light and flexible, will increase their limberness and therefore enhance his control over them.

On account of its being very powerful, this flexion entails a couple of dangers which although only relative must nevertheless be carefully guarded against. This flexion's result being double, the action of either of its forms whether of elevation, or of crest-shaping, must be carefully cultivated according to which one of them is the most desired.

If the flexion of elevation is the one most wanted, the direct-rein hand—when the rider is standing at the horse's near side this will be the left hand—must be ready to make a little tremolo effect, whenever the horse may show a tendency to lower the head; and the hand holding the pulley (opposite) rein, in this case the right hand, must then handle its rein with the greatest possible discretion. (When the rider will be at the off side the right hand will have to make the tremolo.)

If crest-shaping is the result most desired, then the

pulley-rein must be used with a little more definiteness, and the direct-rein used also with a slightly more determined action. The eventual aim of this flexion is to teach both horse and rider—and in this case especially the rider—how to keep the animal's neck rising as high as possible above the shoulders, while bringing the nose in. In this way the curve in the horse's neck is where it ought to be, that is to say: *at the crest*, and not where it usually occurs when other means are employed; for it then usually takes place lower along the neck. Consequently: even if the crest-shaping is the result most desired, it should not be allowed to get to the point of exaggeration, as then there would be danger of the horse eventually learning to bore on a snaffle-rein appeal.

The other danger alluded to—fortunately less frequent—is that the horse may threaten to back. When this occurs it is usually a proof that the rider's pulley hand uses the rein too powerfully. This can be easily obviated by lightening every least part of the arm, or even by hardly using that rein at all; because some horses are so light-necked, and so flexible all along it, that hardly more than the weight of the pulley rein over the top of their head, joined to a slight upward tension of the other rein—even without its hardly acting on the iron—will suffice to obtain the flexion.

In case that, notwithstanding the practical diminution of this rein's action to the vanishing point, the horse insists on plunging the nose lower than desired, a little "tremolo" of the direct snaffle-rein (consequently the one of the side on which the rider is standing) will have the desired result.

(It goes without saying that in this, as in the direct (Baucher) flexions, after the rider has obtained a couple of good ones from one side of the horse, he must pass

to the animal's other side, observing the same precautions when going from one side to another as already advised.)

If the horse threatens to back when requested this flexion,—which may be due also to a natural lack in movement forward—apart from lightening the arm the rider, *without losing contact with the horse's mouth*, must turn forward his direct-snaffle-hand—the one of the horse's side near which he is standing and consequently twist the snaffle-ring also forward, exactly like in the two first (Baucher) flexions (*Fig. 56*)—while continuing the pulley effect, however light this may be, with the other snaffle-rein over the animal's head. He will thus counteract the horse's backward tendency by means of the movement forward. In case this flexion has had, for one reason or another, to be used before the flexion of elevation, either so that the rider should learn to appreciate it more promptly, or in order that the horse learn to respond thereby to that flexion quicker, the rider must return to that first flexion (*Fig. 66*) (of elevation) in view of realizing how much quicker and more easily he can obtain it, because of having obtained the Pulley-flexion first.

Another reason for studying the pulley-flexion previously to the flexion of elevation is because it frequently occurs that: when attempting the flexion of elevation, novices are unaware of the horse's having yielded, but will realize the yielding better as a result of the pulley-flexion, which seems to render its perception clearer to many than does the flexion of elevation.

CHAPTER XIII

FLEXING WHILE ON HORSEBACK

The rider must now learn to flex while being in the saddle. Of course this must be attempted first with the horse standing. And until the rider has reached a little further, and learnt to appreciate the differences in the horse's mouth-movements when his mount is walking, it would be better if a competent horseman were to stand at the horse's head in order: to direct the movements of his hands or legs; to call attention to the excess of arm strength he may make (which is the principal and a most usual defect to be feared); as well as to warn him of any *delay in his relaxing the rein-tension* in response to the horse's flexion, which is quite as common a mistake as the one previously mentioned.

The party on foot can also take the curb-rein (in fact he first ought to do so), in order to prevent the horse from going backward, if the rider's hand-touch were a little too strong; or if his leg-touch—as explained a little further—were too belated. And he especially ought to do so for first attempts in order to help the learner obtain more complete flexions quicker than he would if acting alone.

In order to begin learning to make the horse flex while on his back the rider will take the two snaffle-reins only, one in each hand—exactly like in the first elementary position—and lift them gently and slowly, *perpendicularly, upward*, until in response to this action he feels the horse's jaw *moving*.

As soon as he gets this sensation, he will cease lifting the hands, will slowly turn them, nails upward (*Fig. 41*), by means of a twisting motion of the wrists, but *without stiffening the biceps*—as already warned against several times—and by so doing, he will obtain the flexion.

If for some reason the horse does not flex, the rider, *without increasing the strength of the rein-appeal*, will use, very gently, the uppermost parts of the calves against the horse's sides; and requesting by this means a very slight movement forward, if possible *without actual motion of the horse's limbs*, he will surely obtain the flexion.

Thus the flexion will have been caused by the movement forward, exactly like when, in the first Baucher-flexion, the rider, while on foot, made a tension of the snaffle-rein forward, in order to compel the horse to yield in consequence of the thereby determined movement forward.

If, notwithstanding this gentle leg-action, the horse not only does not flex, but manifests a tendency to back, the rider disregarding the obtention of the flexion, and seeking then only the movement forward, will relax completely all rein-tension, by extending both arms directly in front of him *on a line horizontal with the position they had reached when seeking the flexion*. He will simultaneously use *both* legs, with just such decisiveness, *and no more*, as to obtain sufficient movement forward from the horse—including, if necessary, actual motion of the animal's legs—for him to *go up and meet the snaffle*.

With hands at the necessary level and legs urging the horse sufficiently to make him go up to the iron and thus cause the reins to stretch, the rider is *bound* to obtain the flexion, if not always the first time he tries it, at least the

second, for valid reasons which will be irrefutably explained in the book on Training. (These hesitations and uncertainties do not occur with an experienced rider, except possibly when flexing a green horse; but they often take place under contrary conditions, *i.e.*, when a novice-rider attempts flexions—sometimes even when the “subject” of these experiments is not a green horse.)

When the rider will have learned to obtain the flexion while mounted, from the horse standing still, by means of the snaffle-reins only, he may try to obtain some with the curb-reins, which he will then use in conjunction with the snaffle-reins.

After having interspersed these flexions with riding without stirrups, walking, trotting, etc., the rider will try to obtain a few flexions from the horse *at a slow walk*, if possible under the tutorship of the same competent person on foot holding the curb-reins, as previously advised.

When the rider will begin to seize, at the walk (mounted), the exact moment at which he will have to use the reins so as to obtain the flexion (which will mostly be when the horse will cause them to stretch by going up to the irons, whether of his volition, or in consequence of his rider's leg-urgings); when he will begin to seize the exact moment at which he will have to relax the tension of the reins; when he will begin to do these things in accord with the conditions of strength or lightness of the animal's mouth, in other words: according to whether the horse leans on his hands or not, he will begin to realize to what extent it is necessary, or unnecessary, for him to lift the hands in order to obtain the flexion, and what amount of strength—relative strength, of course—he will have to display, or not, to that end.

Starting from the principle that *no unnecessary action or superfluous degree of strength—either of hands or*

legs—must be effected to obtain anything at all from a horse, the rider must apply himself to begin always asking the flexion by means of *the slightest possible touch*, and consequently with the *least possible elevation of hands*. As soon as he will begin to obtain the flexions with the use of less hand-action, the rider will try to obtain them a little more by the use of leg-action, in order not only that they result more completely from the movement forward, but also that when later on he uses the legs for turning (or for any other purpose), he obtains the flexion simultaneously with the turn—or with any other thing he may be requesting his horse to do.

This is necessary because: if the rider did not seek the flexion previously to the “turn” and did not obtain it simultaneously with the turn, the horse, instead of being light, and therefore easy to turn, would be heavy, and consequently difficult to turn; he would also be clumsy, as usually occurs to every living thing that is heavy. While clumsiness in a horse (as in a person) is ungraceful, and may have disagreeable consequences, even during the mere motion forward on a straight line, its consequences on a turning, apart from increased ungracefulness, might be still more disagreeable especially if the ground over which the horse had to turn were uneven or slippery, or required, for some reason or other, to be negotiated nimbly.

The manner then of turning the horse “in flexion” is identical to that indicated before, with the difference that, each time he will use the hands—and for that matter also the legs—the rider *must* obtain a flexion from the horse *before and while giving him the rein-indications necessary to attract him to the side desired*.

He will then realize that the horse yields more easily to this rein-action in proportion as he is flexed and light;

and he will consequently also realize that in order to maintain the horse's mouth light, and keep it flexing, he (the rider) will have to yield quite as much in response to the flexion as in response to his neck-submission to guidance indications.

The next step will be for the rider to try obtaining flexions while the horse is trotting.

To reach this end he must start the horse trotting on a flexion at the walk; that is to say: he must first obtain a flexion at the walk, and *when* the horse has yielded, consequently *just when the rein-tension is completely annulled*, he must send the horse forward at the trot (by means of leg-taps, of course).

If the horse trots without pulling, and with still greater reason if he continues flexing while at the trot, *no hand-action must be effected the whole time flexions are spontaneously taking place*. Thus the reins will be literally allowed to "float" all the time that the horse continues flexing of his own accord. This rule applies quite as well to the walk, to the canter, and to the gallop, as to the trot (slow or fast), during all of which, if flexing, *the horse's mouth must not be interfered with*. While the horse is continuing to flex spontaneously the rider may turn him if he likes, or if he has to; or he may urge him forward at greater speed, or ask any other movement of him; but he will be able to do all of these things (and others too) without ever having to provoke any curb-pressure on his mount's jaw, therefore only by means of the legs, then especially called "aids."

Numerous spontaneous flexions, following indefinitely, so to speak, only one request, will of course not be obtained immediately by a novice-rider, as such result is very near perfection; but it is nevertheless well that this eventuality be mentioned here in order that, if at any

time a horse gives two, three, or more consecutive flexions, in consequence of one sole hand-action, the novice-rider will know that *he is not to interfere with the animal's mouth while this is taking place*. He will thus begin accustoming himself to the idea of riding *always with floating reins*, and of nevertheless always having his horse thoroughly "in hand," consequently *under perfect control*, which, as already stated, is perfection in Equitation.

Most of the time, especially if he be incompletely trained, or while ridden by a novice, or by reason of incorrect conformation, or through other causes, a horse will lean on the curb again after one or two (or more) flexions, and pull afresh, more or less. The rider will then have to seek a new flexion, or more flexions, all over again, and in fact will have to continue doing so practically indefinitely.

In such a contingency a rider must not yield to impatience and handle the horse roughly so as to force him to flex. He should, on the contrary, be thankful for an opportunity of cultivating patience, and of obtaining flexions—or anything else—by perseverance, appropriate tact, and equanimous determination. This policy will afford him increased control over both the horse *and himself*.

People may consider this tedious, and it may be so for the first few days; but after those few days even reluctant riders become appreciative of the immense advantages flexions procure to their horses as well as to themselves, and therefore seek flexions with ever increasing interest. Eventually, (none of them know exactly when, some after a month, some later, according to the frequency with which they ride, and according to their personal ability), all riders without exception flex their

horses by instinct, as it were, and are then able to talk with fellow-riders, admire the scenery, etc., and yet continue flexing their horses when they find it necessary, because of doing it subconsciously.

Thus it is that when their horse touches the curb in the least, still more so if he pulls, these riders' fingers close, and their legs act, according to necessity; if on the contrary they feel the horse getting "behind the curb" (also called "behind the hand"), the feeling of which is going to be tentatively explained in the following chapter—they instinctively use the legs as required and, sending him "up to the curb," compel him to annul this movement backward and make him consequently flex.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BACKWARD MOVEMENT

"Being behind the curb" or "having the movement backward" is one and the same thing, and ought *never, not for the fraction of a second*, to be allowed in a horse, whether he be in any motion, inclusive of "backing" or even when he is merely standing still.

We have already seen how the horse manifests the "movement backward" at the stand. Once the rider has experienced it at the "stand," he will, with the development of a slightly keener analytical feeling, recognize its presence at the walk, but especially at the trot and canter. (At the gallop there is less tendency for a horse to get "behind the hand," and consequently to have the movement backward; yet it occurs.)

In order to tentatively essay giving the reader an idea of how the horse manifests the "movement backward" while in motion (in other words, how he fails to "go up to the curb"), and in order to try to make a novice-rider at first "guess," probably more than "understand," what it feels like, a little experiment must be suggested.

The learner being then on foot, and walking erect, will first stiffen the upper part of the back, and the top of the shoulders. He will thereby feel that, although he be moving, he is actually opposing his own motion, just as if he were resisting somebody else's push from behind. When doing this he will have, just like the horse, "the movement backward," although he will be walking, or

even running, forward. When done by the horse this is technically termed "not going up to the curb" (or "having the movement backward").

Contrarily: if the learner while walking will, without in any way diminishing the erectness of the torso, lighten the top of the back and of the shoulders, he will increase this "movement forward," and yet not be increasing speed (perhaps not even moving from a given spot).

When a horse does this he is said to "go up to his curb," or to "have the forward movement." So, when the rider feels his mount's shoulders stiffening a little between the withers, or let us say from the middle of the neck to under the pommel of the saddle, he will know that the animal lacks movement forward, in other words: that he is not "going up to the curb."

One of the signs accompanying this very unsatisfactory, and sometimes even dangerous condition is that the horse carries the head high—in some extreme cases balances it from right to left, as if he wanted to look at something behind him—meanwhile being very light of mouth, yet not flexing. (*Fig. 68.*)

These are extreme characteristics which indicate the necessity of *immediate and vigorous action* in order to obtain an *exaggerated* movement forward *at all costs*. Because, in proportion as the horse loses the forward movement, his rider loses control over him, and the animal is then apt to wheel round without notice, balk, rear, or do any other disagreeable thing, which the movement forward *alone* will prevent him from executing.

This is an extreme combination of "symptoms" (if the term may be used in this connection). Usually only one of these symptoms appears, which, while necessitating less drastic treatment, requires nevertheless to be attended to *without delay*, so that the other symptoms

do not graft themselves on it, and make it degenerate into the unwelcome combination already mentioned. (This is an Equestrian application of the household proverb concerning the "stitch in time.")

Sometimes the horse manifests a little backward movement because he is suffering; it therefore behooves the



FIG. 68.

Horse with backward-movement and head high. (Compare position of legs "at support," of hind quarters, loins, and withers with the same in Fig. 54.)

rider to find out whether such is the case before acting vigorously, and inflicting punishment. For example: he may have a sore back.

To obviate against such an eventuality, which may occur especially in consequence of a long ride, the rider must see, when he stops anywhere, either for a picnic in the open, or at an inn, that the horse's saddle is taken

off; that its saddle-cloth is put up to dry; and if they be stopping at an inn, that the animal be placed in a clean, airy, and yet warm stall, in which he will not catch a cold.

If these saddle precautions are not properly attended to the horse may feel more or less incisive pain from a recent bruise, or the re-opening of some old one, which may cause him to get behind the curb.

Again: if a long ride is effected during which the animal is—as of course—not unsaddled, and keeps going on steadily, he may have a disagreeable desire to void, which may urge him to wish he could go home, or be allowed to stop a while. (Some horses never satisfy themselves in this respect when ridden, or even while saddled, and therefore the rider must ascertain, before punishing his mount whether this is not the reason for his going behind the curb.)

Or the curb-chain may be too tight; or a previous rider with uneducated or hard hands may have injured the animal's mouth—whether interiorly or exteriorly—causing him to fear the touch of the irons; or he may suffer from a painful bruise hidden under the bridle's leathers (possibly behind the ears); or he may be tired to the extent of leg-weariness, so common to unfortunate riding-school "slaveys"; or he may be out of breath through immediate hard riding; or he may be short-winded, etc.

Some horses get behind the curb not with the head high, but with the neck curved and the head drawn more or less close into the chest. (This is called "en-capuchonné" in French, and in Italian "incapucciato.") (*Fig. 69.*)

When horses get behind the curb with the low-head position they usually munch the irons (a very different thing from flexing)—occasionally more the snaffle than

the curb—in which case they also grind the teeth. This is mostly a manifestation of anger.

Some horses who get behind the curb with the head high munch the irons too, but they then very rarely grind the teeth.

The going behind the curb with the neck curved and



FIG. 69.

Horse with backward-movement but head low. (Compare position of legs "at support," of hindquarters, loins, and withers, with the same in Fig. 54.)

the head low is a more disagreeable proposition than the other one.

When a horse goes behind the curb with the head up there is nothing else to do but to send him forward, while keeping the hands low; but when he does so with the head down, not only must the rider send him forward,

but he must, simultaneously, get his head up to a normal level, or else all the sending forward will be of little avail.

And here is precisely where the trouble starts because: if the horse behind the curb with low head is bent upon



FIG. 70.

Saberwise use of whip. Left hand slash.

doing something mischievous, he will seize the excuse of the rider's elevative hand-action to stop, or try to rear, or anything at all, sometimes even though the rider's hand-action has all the necessary delicacy, and his leg-

action all the desired vigor. In such cases, the whip must be used, saber-like, right-and-left of the animal's flanks (*Fig. 70*) in quick succession, and used vigorously—even, if necessary, repeatedly. But then like in all other similar cases that may offer, *the whip-repetitions must cease as soon as ever the desired result is obtained*, else the horse will balk instead of going forward at the touch of the whip, and thus the remedy will be worse than the reason for which it was employed.

Although a novice-rider will, of course, be incapable of facing these conditions, because of the violence with which a horse may react to punishment, it is advisable that he know about them, for future reference, when, as to be hoped, he will have outgrown the "novice" stage; besides which, under certain circumstances, it may be more advisable for him to stand the chance of staying in the saddle notwithstanding a couple of bounds the horse may give rather than run the risks that the backward movement of his mount may entail, either immediately or eventually.

CHAPTER XV

THE STIRRUPS

RIDING WITHOUT STIRRUPS

One of the best means for the acquiring of a good seat, and therefore gaining confidence on horseback, is to learn to ride without stirrups while going at a medium-speed trot (say making the mile in five or six minutes at the very outside).

The improvement of the seat thereby occurs because the rider, being deprived of stirrups, has to sink still deeper in the saddle in order to maintain his equilibrium. Moreover, as in the absence of stirrups the rider has not a single thing to depend on capable of giving him even the semblance of support, or better said: guidance for the legs he gets from the stirrups, he is bound to learn to ride "by balance."

If he has the patience to practice long enough riding without stirrups, and if he is endowed with the necessary Equestrian gifts, he will eventually learn to ride by balance so well that the slightest little fleeting touch of his feet on the stirrups, or even the mere knowledge that they are there, will give him a firmness of such elastic quality, that he will be able to hold on to his horse very much better and under much more difficult circumstances, than if he had never practised riding without stirrups.

The learner must first ride without stirrups at the walk. To this end he must cross the stirrup-leathers in

front of the saddle—*i.e.*, over the horse's withers, not over the saddle's pommel—in such fashion that the stirrups dangle in front of the *saddle*, and not merely in front of his *legs*. If this were not so, the stirrups would hurt his legs. (And if they were not crossed in front of the saddle, and were left dangling at full length, they would hit the rider's feet and undoubtedly hurt him.)

When stirrupless, the rider must lengthen the legs as far down as possible, *toes downward*, but he must especially get the seat as low in the saddle as he possibly can. To this end he must ride, if anything, with the torso still more erect than when he has stirrups, and lean a *trifle* more backward with the shoulders, *especially when trotting*.

But he must take care to maintain the *utmost flexibility* in every part of the body—torso and upper-limbs, as well as legs—because the least stiffness results in disagreeable consequences manifesting themselves more promptly when a rider has no stirrups than when he has them.

The reason for at first allowing the toes to point downward is because the effort to lower the heels causes to the beginner especially a stiffness of the lower leg which, not being counteracted by the bends at the ankle and at the knee, nor by the slanting position of the thigh (that the rider enjoys with the stirrups on) spreads to the upper-part of the leg, and eventually to the torso, with, as consequences, the pernicious results alluded to several times already.

But, when the rider will begin to feel himself a little more at home without stirrups, it will be very advisable that, precisely in order to increase his leg-flexibility, which he will then be able to obtain, he practices a couple of foot and ankle exercises which will help him in this regard.

(Figs. 71, 72 and 73.) The first of these exercises consists in alternately lifting the toes, and then the heel, of one foot three or four times in succession. He must do this *leisurely*, especially at first, in order to avoid any stiffness of instep, ankle, or tendon of Achilles. After having done this with one limb, he must do it with the other; and repeat a few times with both legs *alternately*.

The other exercise is to move one leg, from the knee

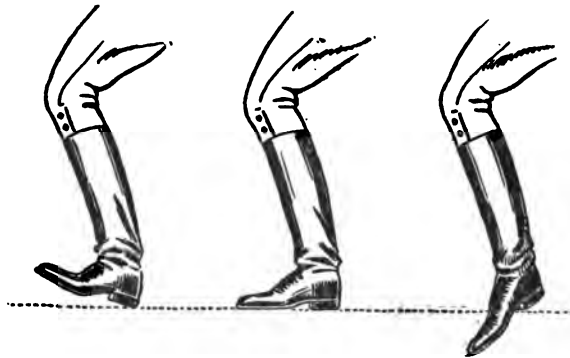


FIG. 71.

FIG. 72.

FIG. 73.

Ankle-joint flexion: toes up; then parallel with the heel; finally down (and vice versa). (When stirrupless, the leg ought not to bend at the knee.)

down, backward and forward as far as it can go either way, *leisurely* also, and without laying any stress on a bend of the knee. In this exercise the foot must go pendulum-like, as far forward, and as far backward, as it can, *without the rider having to make the slightest effort.* (Fig. 74.)

After having ridden a short while without stirrups, the rider must put them on again, as care must be taken that the thighs do not become tired, and still less that he feel any pain in their internal-side muscles.

After he will have accustomed himself a little to ride without stirrups at the walk, the rider may attempt a few steps of "jog" without stirrups, later on a few steps of "slow trot," and so forth, following exactly the same progression he observed when first learning to ride at the jog and the trot and doing this for the same reason.

After each few steps, the rider will then, not only

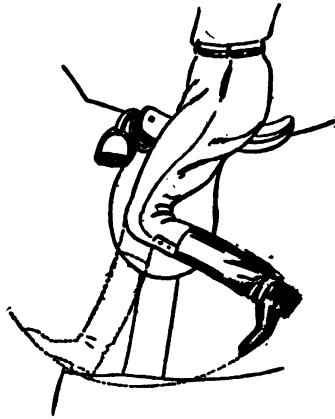


FIG. 74.

Pendulum-like exercise of leg. (Especially the first times, the bend at the knee should not be so marked as it is here.)

adjust whatever little incorrections in deportment may have intervened, but also, and especially, increase his relaxation and flexibility. As it then will probably be found more necessary to cultivate flexibility in the legs than in any other parts of the body, it would be advisable for the rider to do one or two leg-flexions, of either of the two already described sorts, in the intervals between the tempi of jog, or trot.

When the rider's feet will be placed in the stirrups

after having been a while without them he will more than probably find them a little too short, and feel more comfortable if they are lengthened one or perhaps even two points.

TAKING THE STIRRUPS

The rider must now learn how to replace a stirrup which may have slipped off his foot, without stopping his horse. This minor accident is of comparatively frequent occurrence, especially among novice-riders who have been advised to "grip with the knees," before having learnt relaxation, and places more than one novice-rider, at times even some fairly good ones, who do not know how to do it, in a very embarrassing position, especially if riding in company of inconsiderate companions.

If a correctly adjusted stirrup slips off from a foot, the rider, in order to replace it, has only to lift the fore-part of this foot, while turning its toes toward the horse's shoulder; he must do this without changing the position of any part of his leg or body, and especially without looking down toward foot and stirrup. If he adheres strictly to this recommendation the stirrup will automatically slip on the foot, as it had slipped off it, by reason of its own momentum, due to the pendulum-like movements it executes *in consequence of the horse's motion*.

If on the contrary the rider looks down toward foot and stirrup, he *inevitably* changes the position of his seat—pulling it both backward and sideways, and consequently displacing the leg. Thus the foot not being any longer either in line with, or at the height of, the stirrup, cannot possibly get into it without strivings of the leg which tend to impair still more the *rider's firmness in the saddle*.

If the rider does anything else but lift the forepart of the foot, consequently if, while attempting to recover the stirrup, he moves the foot in the least, instead of achieving the desired end, he either pushes or kicks the stirrup away—according to the degree of foot activity he will have exercised while seeking the iron. By kicking thus he whirls the stirrup away, probably against the horse's elbow, from which it rebounds with more or less violence (especially if the horse has moved with more or less vivacity on feeling the hit), and then his foot has but a very slim chance of coming in contact with the stirrup again, otherwise than to collide with it afresh, which of course, only makes matters worse.

In order then that the rider get accustomed to picking the stirrups up quickly and easily, it is necessary that he voluntarily let one of them slip off his foot, *but without raising the knee*.

Were he to raise the knee he would do exactly the thing which is inadvisable under any circumstance, but especially when picking up a stirrup, because of placing the foot, beforehand, in a disadvantageous position.

This exercise must be practised first at a slow trot—just a little more than a jog—because at the walk the momentum of the horse's movement being generally insufficient to give the stirrup the pendulum motion, and consequently to restore it on to the foot, it is usually less easy, especially for a beginner, to pick it up at the slower gait than at the faster.

After having practiced this successfully at the trot, repeat at the canter, when it will be found still easier to perform. Alternate the feet, etc., like in all other exercises. And the more flexibility, and "laissez-aller" the rider will have, the more easily and the quicker will he find the stirrups.

Eventually the rider will do well to slip off both stirrups at the same time and try to take them both back simultaneously, as easily as he may have been retaking one.

EQUILIBRIUM WITHOUT THE STIRRUPS

When the learner who is unaccustomed to ride without stirrups feels he is going to lose his balance, it is better for him to walk the horse or even to stop him rather than trying to maintain his equilibrium by any other means.

When riding without stirrups, balance is to be sought *only by increasing the weight of the foot of the side from which one is* (let us say) *falling off*. (Although when a person feels himself "falling off" it is generally too late to do anything else but clutch (convulsively!) at anything at all, or let one's self go without abandoning the reins—unless the horse is going so fast that the fallen rider, if he were still holding the reins, faces the danger of being dragged and perhaps trampled upon, or still worse, kicked at by the horse.)

If then let us say, the rider feels he *is going to be unbalanced* to the right—as distinct from "going to fall off"—he must increase the weight of the *left foot*—not of the left knee, leg or thigh, but of the *left foot only*, while he simultaneously stops his mount's trot.

If, instead of doing this, he tries to regain his threatened balance by moving the shoulders toward the side he is falling off *from*, he will of necessity by so doing, push the seat toward the side he is falling off *to*, and consequently make matters merely worse.

He must not try to hold on by catching at the saddle, because once he takes the habit of securing himself by catching the saddle (called "pulling leather"), or by

taking hold of the horse's mane, he will find it so easy that he will eventually do it at the least provocation.

Apart from being unhorsemanlike, this may be actually dangerous—especially if riding with the English (or second elementary) position of reins—because if the rider “pulls leather,” or takes hold of the horse's mane with both hands, he simultaneously abandons all control of the animal's mouth. And the doing of this when already unbalanced may have other and more disagreeable results for him, because the horse, being freed, will either run faster, or cavort more violently than he may have been, or both.

If on the other hand, while holding the reins in the English manner, he “pulls leather” or takes hold of the horse's mane *with one hand only*, he will of necessity pull the animal's head to that side, by the very fact that the other one of his hands having advanced to clutch at mane and having thus lost control of its side of the horse's mouth, will have rendered the other side's reins tense and therefore active enough to twist the animal's head:

Then: In consequence of his head being suddenly pulled around, the horse's equilibrium will be as suddenly altered, and that will certainly not add to the rider's already impaired balance. It is therefore very much better for the rider, when feeling himself unbalanced, to, as already advised, walk his horse rather than pull leather to regain his equilibrium, then correct other irregularities that may have occurred, and try again, this time maintaining with more determination his feet uniformly weighty, and paying also greater attention to lean the torso back a little more than if he had the stirrups on.

When turning — especially if stirrupless — the rider's *interior foot* must be made immediately weightier; that

is to say: if he is turning to the *right*, it is the *right foot's* weight that must be increased. (But not for that reason must the left foot's weight be diminished.)

The rider must not at first go on trotting without stirrups during long spells, but must gradually increase the number of steps he trots without stirrups until he can eventually ride quite a little while thus without being tired, and especially without feeling any pain in the thighs.

Later on, if he adheres to the foregoing recommendations, he will be able to rise to the trot (post) without stirrups. And only then will he be justified in saying that he rides well without stirrups (provided of course the other qualifications for riding correctly are present).

CHAPTER XVI

DELICATE USE OF THE LEGS

Persons undesirous of acquiring more than the very elementary knowledge imparted by this book should skip this chapter because: regarding only the delicate use of the legs, it will generally prove superfluous to them for the reason that most American saddle-horses are absolutely untrained to the use of the legs, excepting as a means of punishment, from which they fly, poor creatures, in utter dread, fear, and trembling.

But those who intend to advance, even slightly deeper into the knowledge of riding-on-horseback—more properly termed “Equitation” when at the higher degree this chapter prepares for—had better read all the following, and study it closely.

They will thereby place themselves in the way to enjoy pleasures hitherto unknown to them, and absolutely unsuspected by any riders who have not made this study, pleasures which will open up new vistas for their mind; will give them new interest not only in horsemanship, but even in life—without any exaggeration—because the new study they will make of the horse; the constant analysis of the “reason why” of his every movement; the perfect control they will have to gain, not only over their physical self, but also over their moral and intellectual self, in order to obtain the same sort and degree of control over the horse; will give them a new outlook in life; will act on them as a constant means of discipline (which every human being requires at every age and in

every condition of life) ; will modify, and probably improve their philosophy; and will consequently place them in better condition than before to commune with their fellow creatures.

In order then to insure this complete and delicate control of the lower-leg, it is absolutely necessary that first at the walk, and later at the slow trot, the rider carry one leg *slightly* backward—but so delicately as not in any way to excite the horse—that he keep it there for a while, always as lightly, *at the same time* correcting any little stiffness of thigh, any difference of position (principally in the seat) and especially any loss of flexibility in the torso, which first attempts, probably even second and third attempts, will assuredly determine, to some extent or other. (*Figs. 47 and 48.*)

Having done this with one leg he will do it with the other, taking care first to bring the lower-leg with which he began, back to the position “at rest,” before starting the same exercise with the new leg (with which, needless to say, he will take the same precautions, and execute the same corrections). Having executed the first exercise properly, with his legs going only to that *slight* extent alternately backward, and having repeated it a couple of times—or even a couple of days, according to his proficiency, and the degree of his natural flexibility which will, of course, usually be much greater in youth than in more advanced years, and readier in persons of the female sex . . . (these rules are not absolute), the rider should try to carry the legs—always alternating them, etc.—a little more backward and then still a little more, until he can displace them with as much ease to the farthest point he can reach with the heels along the horse’s sides, without moving the torso, impairing its flexibility, or displacing his seat. This may take a week,

or it may take a month; but in order to allay any undue impatience on the rider's part, it must hastily be added that five conditions are absolutely necessary to learn to ride on horseback with any degree of perfection: the first of these is "Patience"; the second is "Knowledge," either on the part of the teacher, of the book we consult, or of the trainer (when we reach the training stage); the third is "again Patience"; the fourth is the "Will to Learn," on the part of the pupil, or the "Will to Impart," on the part of the teacher (or the trainer); and the fifth is "more Patience." In order to enjoy the best results it is imperative that all of those five conditions be ever present, because if conditions 1, 3 and 5 are absent, conditions 2 and 4 are next to valueless.

To return to the subject of the control of the legs: the next phase of this study (following the facility of putting them backward easily and *lightly*) is the putting of them *alternately* backward, easily—i.e., without involving any other part of the body—and at the same time doing this *quickly*, and *yet lightly*.

To achieve this end the same precautions must be taken as in the previous exercises, and the rider must proceed very gradually, passing from a *very* slow exchange of legs, to one a tiny bit faster, then a little faster, and so forth, until he can alternate each lower limb, at every tempo, or at least at every other tempo of the horse's slow trot.

But he must pay very great attention, all the time he is doing this, that his *position*, his *flexibility*, and especially his *seat*, are not disturbed, or even impaired, in the *slightest degree*, by these exercises, as, if such were to be the case they would prove harmful rather than beneficial.

The lightness and delicacy used in sending the lower legs alternately backward fast must be such as not to

excite the horse in the least. (Of course it will be very advisable to start these exercises on a gentle and placid horse.)

The reason for its being so absolutely necessary to perform these exercises with a very light touch of the legs, is that in this way *and only in this way*, is their absolute control attainable. And it will be later on found that the energy in the use of the legs—to be manifested when energy will be deemed necessary—will be easily developed when once their absolute control will have been obtained. Then the riding of a really *dull* horse, for a few days, will again be advisable, because by the very necessity of having to use the lower-legs on this dull horse with vigor, promptness in repetition, and even severity (always without moving the seat, impairing his flexibility, etc.) the rider will promptly develop these new qualities in the lower limbs. And he will find these to be sooner obtainable than the delicacy of leg-touch, especially if this delicacy of leg-touch has previously been thoroughly cultivated.

In the working of the legs backward there is a very important point to be observed, which is this: in proportion as the lower-leg goes backward the toes must be gradually turned more and more *outward*, so that when the lower leg has reached as far back as its heel can go, along the horse's side, the toes will be sticking *outward at right angles from the horse's flank*. (*Fig. 49b.*)

There are three reasons for which this should be so, each one of which is as valid as any of the other two. (1) If when the foot is pushed backward the toe is *not* turned outward the stirrup is very liable to slip away from the foot, and the rider become unseated, especially if a novice. (If an expert, the loss of a stirrup that way is of no consequence.)

(When the stirrup's leather breaks, then the matter is more serious, unless the expert is just at that moment, not touching the stirrup—which ought oftener to be the case than not—especially with an expert.)

(2) When we put our leg backward—excepting for the flexing exercise—we apparently intend conveying some meaning to the horse. If then the toe is *not* turned out, the lower-leg, although pushed backward, will *not* be close enough to the horse's side to touch him, and consequently will not convey to him any meaning. (When this is done for exercise the toe must still be turned out, but, the leg must be moved so gently as *not* to convey any meaning to the horse, nor to excite him, and thus, as already said, still greater delicacy of touch, and consequently still greater control of the lower-leg will be acquired.)

(3) If when the leg is pushed backward the toe is not gradually turned outward, the thigh will immediately lose its closeness of contact with the saddle, and continue so losing it that when the leg is pushed completely back the thigh will be quite loose. A very simple experiment with the help of a third party on foot will prove this contention.

This third party will have only to move the rider's lower-leg backward with one hand, while slipping the other hand flat, palm toward the saddle-flap, between the rider's thigh and the saddle, and he will find it the easier to do so, as the rider's lower-leg will go more and more backward, without his toes turning outward.

Then, *without the rider's making the slightest effort*, just by twisting his toes outward by means of the hand with which he is holding them, the party on foot will find his other hand pinched between the rider's thigh and the saddle,

Now: while at every movement, as has been said, the closeness of the thigh's contact with the saddle must be constant, however gently and supplely this may be done there is still greater reason for this closeness to be maintained when the leg is being pushed backward; because at that moment the horse, if mistaking its indication, may make some greater or more untoward movement than the rider may have bargained for, and the rider will thus be threatened with being unseated, in direct proportion as the closeness of his thigh's contact with the saddle will have been lessened.

While pushing the lower-leg backward the rider must pay attention *not to lift the heel*—a thing which even a good rider, if not careful, is apt to do. A good way of detecting this is to feel whether a tension of the tendon of Achilles accompanies the backward movement of the lower-leg. If it does, the heel is low, as it should be; if it does not, the heel is high.

In order then to easily remedy the elevation of the heel, a trick of very easy execution is commendable, *i.e., turn the big toe upward*. (This was advised by one of my former assistants, since deceased, Vincenzo Di Marco.)

The rider's feet must touch the stirrups so lightly, *if at all*, even when "rising to the trot" (called posting), that these irons will be more an ornament than anything else. This is always the case with an expert rider who therefore has the stirrups sometimes under the ball of the feet, sometimes "home," and sometimes has one stirrup completely off a foot, without these differences influencing him in the least.

CHAPTER XVII

RISING AT THE TROT (ALSO CALLED POSTING)

When the rider will have learned to sit to the trot properly, and flexibly, he can learn to post very easily. It is absolutely necessary to know how to post, because, when one has long rides to perform, rising to the trot is a relief to both man and horse.

Posting consists in elevating the whole of the body, from the knees upward, at each half-step of a horse's trot. The "full" step in a horse's trot is the tread of both of the diagonal couples of limbs. The horse, as already said, when trotting, moves the legs by diagonal pairs: the left hindleg simultaneously with the right foreleg, and the right hindleg simultaneously with the left foreleg.

Each one of these diagonal-pair leg movements is called a tempo. In order then that the rider "post," also called "rise to the trot," he must "sit," *elastically*, to one of these tempi, and the very fact of his doing this will *send him up*, thus making him rise from the saddle, *during the next tempo*, from which he will sit *again* at the following tempo, and so forth "ad infinitum."

As he rises in consequence of the propulsion given him by any one of the two pairs of the horse's legs, he can choose to rise on any one of them, and consequently post (rise) at will, on either the right or the left foot. He is said to be "rising on the right foot" when he is "up" on

the fall of the "right diagonal" (composed of the right front foot, and the left hind foot), and vice versa, he is said to be "rising on the left foot," when he is off the saddle on the left diagonal pair's beat. (*Figs. 75 and 76.*)

CHANGING LEGS AT THE TROT

A rider must be careful not to rise always on the same foot, because the same diagonal pair of the horse's legs being thus "favored" (eased), they, getting more freedom, work more, on account of their ability to move with greater facility. While this may prove pretty satisfactory for a time, the increased energy expended by this pair of legs eventually uses them up prematurely (especially the front leg), and the horse therefore runs the risk of being blemished earlier on that leg than if he were ridden in such wise as to cause him to work both diagonal pairs of legs in equal proportion.

It is then absolutely necessary that the rider apply himself to rise to the trot, alternately on one "lead" and on the other, every five or ten minutes or so, according to the length of time he keeps the trot up, rising in preference on the diagonal which the horse does not use as well as the other. It often occurs that, without favoring a leg, or hitching, or still less being lame, a horse makes freer and more willing use of one diagonal pair of legs than of the other, and is consequently more agreeable to post on that leg; the rider must nevertheless not yield to the temptation of posting preferably on it.

The change from one "lead" to another can be very easily effected while trotting, by the simple process of sitting to two tempi of the trot, instead of sitting to only one tempo, as this will automatically send the rider "up" on the beat of the other pair of legs.



Photo by Haas.

FIG. 75. "PEG O' MY HEART."

Miss A. N Burk (up) showing rising on the left foot; also legs being used while rising, without impairing position of remainder of body.





Photo by Haas.

FIG. 76.—“PEG O’ MY HEART.”

Property of Miss A. N. Burk (up), trained by this clever horse-woman under the Author’s direction. Showing rising to the trot without leaning shoulders forward. Rising on the right foot.

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In order to learn to do this easily, the rider has only to number while trotting the tread of each diagonal pair of legs, say 1 left and 2 right. If he "rises" to 1 (left), he, of necessity, sits to 2 (right). If he then sits to both 2 and 1, the propulsion from 1 (the left leg) will make him rise to 2 (right) and thus he will have "changed legs." And if, after a while he sits to both 1 (left) and 2 (right) the propulsion from 2 (right) will make him rise to 1 (left) again, and thus he will have "rechanged" legs.

When the rider "posts" there must be no visible difference in his whole position on horseback, neither of torso, arms, nor legs. He must solely have, if we may say, a little movement forward, *in the top of the shoulders*, which, as already demonstrated, for the exemplification of the horse's "movement forward," can be obtained without impairment of the torso's erect bearing.

The "rise" must not be effected from the stirrups, but from the knees, which persons who have learnt to sit to the trot well can do easily. The rise from the stirrups is wrong because, producing an exaggerated motion, it prevents the seizing of the correct swing (rhythm, tempo), of the trot, and often causes riders to balance the legs back and forth uncouthly.

The advantages to be derived from rising from the knees are, among others, that the lower limbs being thus uninfluenced by the remainder of the rider's body are free, and can therefore either be kept perfectly still, or be used as necessity may offer, without impairing the "rise."

Those who have not learnt to sit to the trot are moreover apt to clutch the reins at each "rise," a grave fault, ruinous to horse's mouths, and often injurious to their temper also.

It often occurs to a novice-rider, and especially to a learner to lose a stirrup while rising to the trot; this is still more apt to occur to such riders when they attempt changing feet at the trot. A good means for protecting themselves against this mishap is for them to lean the inner sides of the soles of the feet—the sides closer to the horse—slightly more against the stirrups, and consequently to slightly lift the outer sides of the soles off the stirrups. By doing this they will also cause the knees to come in closer contact with the saddle. Nevertheless: when they will have become more efficient they will be able to rise to the trot, and change feet trotting, while having the feet either flat on the stirrups—as they preferably ought to—or lifting one side more than the other, at their will, or as circumstances require, without running the slightest risk of losing a stirrup.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CANTER

Before learning how to obtain this gait, we must describe it. The real canter is a three-tempo gait, whereby the horse progresses *slowly*, and gracefully, for-



FIG. 77.

Canter on the left foot (lead), first tempo; right hind foot "at support," other three in air; head slightly turned to the side of the leading foot; rider's right leg "in action." (Notice horse's left legs ahead of other two.) (Gait purposely exaggerated.)

ward, with a boat-like, or cradle-like motion. Thus his forepart—whether we consider it from the withers or from the feet (*Fig. 77*), and his hindquarters—whether we consider them from the top of the rump, or from the feet (*Fig. 78*) rise alternately as high above their normal

level the one as the other. (There are also four-tempo canters, the study of which does not come in the scope of this book.)

Ridden by an expert, a thoroughly well-trained, supplied, balanced, well-poised horse must be able to

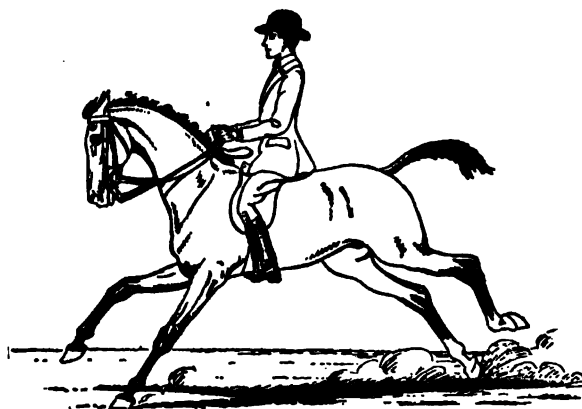


FIG. 78.

Gallop on the right foot (lead), second tempo; left diagonal "at support," other two feet in the air; horse's head very slightly turned to the side of the leading foot; the movement forward being very marked, the rider's "working" leg is only slightly displaced back of the position "at rest." (Notice horse's two right legs ahead of other two.) (Gait purposely exaggerated.)

canter, when desired, as slowly as a horse of his size, and even one smaller than he, can walk with average slowness by his side. ("Averagely slow" is emphasized because there are free-moving, well-built, and well-trained horses who can walk so fast that other horses have to jog in order to keep up with them; and therefore it stands to reason that the accompanying of such a fast

walker by another horse at the canter would by no means be slow cantering.)

Just as a horse in the above conditions can canter as slowly as that, a finished High School horse, provided he be sufficiently high-strung, yet level-headed, and provided he have sufficient limb-power, yet elasticity—a combination not often encountered—will be able to canter, and even change feet cantering, without moving from a given spot. (In order to do this properly such a horse must, of course, be ridden by a High School rider, and preferably, though not necessarily, by the one who trained him.)

The canter thus described has consequently nothing in common with the rather brisk gallop, erroneously called canter, which so many riders indulge in; still less is it related to the preliminary canter which running horses are put to before a race. While riding out of doors the canter may be a little freer than when practised in a ring; it ought nevertheless not to be allowed to become a gallop, except once in a while—when a horse may need a little stirring-up—nor still less must it be permitted to degenerate into a race, excepting very rarely, and then, never on a park bridle-path. As the horse canters with either front foot leading, he can consequently canter on the right or on the left “lead.” Thus if he is well trained, and even if he has only an average training, provided he is *not* more or less used up (crippled, or otherwise incapacitated) on any limb, he must be able to canter as easily on one foot as on the other, *at his rider's will*.

When a horse canters on the right foot—which means on the right forefoot leading—his canter tempi are divided as follows: (1) left hind foot; (2) left diagonal pair, consisting of right hind foot and left front foot; (3) right forefoot. Therefore, at two of these three canter tempi the animal's whole weight bears momen-

tarily on but one foot, that is to say: in the first tempo of the canter (on the right lead) the animal's whole weight is on the left hind foot, and in the third tempo his whole weight is on the right forefoot.

It is then only at the second tempo that his weight is normally distributed, to wit: on one diagonal pair of feet. (The "left canter" is identical, excepting that the order of motion of the horse's feet is reversed, *i.e.*, (1) right hind foot; (2) right diagonal pair, consisting of left hind foot and right front foot; (3) left forefoot.)*

As then at two of the tempi of canter the horse's whole weight bears on one foot only, alternately the hindfoot, and the forefoot, of one diagonal pair, it is comprehensible that for him not to suffer premature crippling of those limbs by reason of the greater use made of them, work should be equally divided between them, and therefore he should be made to canter at times on one lead and at times on the other.

Example: when on a long ride canter is indulged in, a change of feet must be effected at regular intervals, in order that, as much as possible, all of the horse's feet be equally used. So that when, after a horse has walked and trotted (slow and fast) sufficiently, a tempo of canter is considered desirable, quite as much to give both horse and rider a little diversion in gait, as probably to seize the opportunity of a nice bit of level, soft road; half the time employed at this gait should be spent on one foot, and the other half on the other foot.

The division of time alluded to must be made to accord with the degree of fitness and resistance a horse—or the

* There is a fourth tempo which no one, excepting Mr. Fillis and Mr. Gustave Lebon, has apparently taken into account, because it is extremely short, and is furthermore silent. That tempo is when the horse is all-fours-off-the-ground, between the third tempo of one canter-step, and the first tempo of the following one.

horses in a party—may present, as well as with the condition of "terrain." In respect to the first of these points, it must be remembered that a good horseman never tires his mount out, but tries to keep him as fresh as possible whether at the end of a long ride, or, with still better reason, at any time during that ride. With regard to the second point it must also be borne in mind that, as the horse canters—and gallops—with his body's whole weight alternately on one hind foot, and on one front foot, these gaits, and especially the gallop, must be indulged in only where the ground is favorable, that is: level and soft. These gaits must consequently not be obtained while travelling on roads which are full of holes or stony, for reasons which are clear enough without further explanation.

When cantering, the horse has the forefoot with which he is leading—also said to be the one on which he is cantering—a little ahead of the other, and the hind-foot of the same side also a little ahead of the other hind-foot. Thus, if he is cantering on the right foot (right lead), both his right feet will be slightly ahead of their respective mates. (*Figs. 77 and 78.*)

Consequently, if we consider the space covered by the horse's four feet as an elongated quadrangle, this quadrangle will be displaced at the moment he canters, in such wise as to somewhat take the form of a lozenge; as hereunder:

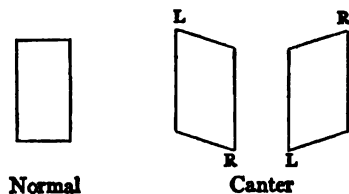


FIG. 79.

In order then that the horse be able to canter on any one of the two leads, his rider must place the animal's legs, and consequently his body, in precisely this lozenge-position so as to make it easy for him to start cantering on the desired foot.

Thus if it is intended that the horse canter on the right foot (or lead) his hindquarters must be inclined very slightly to the right, in order that his right forefoot, as well as his right hindfoot, be ahead of his two left feet. (Vice versa: if he is to canter on the left foot, his hindquarters must be inclined very slightly to the left.)

As when cantering the horse progresses forward with a boat-like motion, elevating alternately forepart, and hindquarters, he must, at the first step of the canter, elevate the forepart higher than he had it at the previous gait, *which should always be the walk*.

A digression must here be made to combat the very serious error riders commit by *allowing* their horses to "break" from the trot to the canter. Consequently, their still grosser error in *making* their horses break from the trot into the canter must be absolutely condemned. There are three principal gaits for the saddle-horse: the WALK, the TROT, and the CANTER; and these gaits being totally different from each other, must be kept separate, for the horse's good—represented by the better maintenance of his equilibrium—as well as for the rider's comfort and pleasure.

Anyone who has had the slightest experience in riding knows, unless he is one of those who are satisfied with figuring as mere "passengers" on the top of a horse, that there are few things so disagreeable as being mounted on one that is continually breaking from trot into canter, then back again into the trot, and again into the canter, and so forth. He also knows how irksome

it is to be continuously checking the canter of one's mount, putting him back to the trot, etc.; and he realizes that if he be in company he will have either to be continuously falling back of his consort's horse, or compelling him (or her) to be incessantly checking their mount, then sending it forward again, and so forth, "ad infinitum," all of which mars the pleasure of a ride.

It is therefore extremely advisable that a rider should learn, and teach his horse—even if it be his only temporarily—to break into the canter from the walk, and not from the trot. When horses are not trained to do so, it is difficult, sometimes nearly impossible, to obtain this result at the first attempt. Therefore while for the first time (or first times), in such cases a few steps of trot, or preferably jog, may be permissible, the number of these steps of jog must be gradually diminished at each fresh start cantering until the horse learns to break into the canter from the walk in response to the indications of his rider's legs, and hands.

(As the novice-rider will experience the same difficulty when first trying to make any other than an experienced Manège horse start cantering from the walk, he must observe the same progression when learning to canter.) In consequence of the boat-like motion of the canter, and especially because of this gait's first stride elevating the horse's forepart higher than his hindquarters, it is necessary that the rider's weight be leaned slightly backward in order that, the animal's shoulders being relieved of weight to that extent, they be able to rise into the canter with greater ease.

To this end *in direct opposition to what is usually done*, the rider, while leaning the shoulders *backward* though keeping the torso flexible, *and without changing in the least the position of torso or of seat*, must weigh very

slightly more on that half of the seat placed on the side *opposite* to the foot the horse is desired to canter on. Consequently, he must weigh slightly more on the left



FIG. 80.

Rider starting his mount into the left canter correctly,—torso erect; shoulders leaning slightly back, squarely; arms and seat well placed; right leg in working position; horse's head invisible because correctly placed, i.e., turned toward the leading side.



FIG. 81.

Rider starting his mount into the canter incorrectly. Notice twisted torso; shoulders leaning forward, uneven; elbows open; seat off saddle; right leg not working; horse's head visible because incorrectly placed, i.e., turned away from the leading side.

half of the seat if he wants the horse to canter on the right lead, and on the right half if he wants him to canter on the left lead. (Fig. 80.) (When riding a very well

trained horse, the expert rider will have to weigh on neither side, but simply keep the torso naturally, and flexibly, erect.)

The foregoing is contrary to what is usually done because the custom followed at present is for the rider to lean the shoulders forward, bending them towards the foot on which the horse is desired to canter. (*Fig. 81.*) By adopting this incorrect posture the rider increases instead of decreasing, as he should, the weight on the horse's shoulders, and compels him therefore to make a greater effort in order to elevate his forepart in the first stride of the canter than he otherwise would have to. The result is that, when they start into this gait, animals thus handled are rarely, if ever, smooth and graceful, although, especially if they be thoroughbreds or near-thoroughbreds, their canter may, after a few strides, become smoother and more or less graceful.

Then, as in order to take this incorrect torso-position the rider has necessarily to twist his seat on the saddle, it occurs that his weight being pushed *against* the side on which he wants the horse to canter, the animal's opposite side, hindquarters especially, are freed. The result usually is that when the horse thus ridden fortuitously starts on the lead he is desired to canter on, seven, if not nine, times out of ten he will start mixed (dis-united), that is to say, cantering on one foot in front, and on the opposite foot behind. And anybody who has ridden even only a little knows how uncomfortable and disagreeable is the feeling of the mixed (dis-united) canter. Exceptionally, this does not take place, and the horse canters on the lead that is desired.

In order that the particular forefoot on which it is desired that the horse canter have still greater freedom of action, it is also necessary that the animal's head be

slightly turned *toward the side of that foot*—consequently *to the right* if the horse has to canter on *the right foot*, and *to the left* if he has to canter on *the left foot*. This rule is totally contrary to what is usually done at the present time.

In order to realize whether this manner of doing is correct or not, a person has only to stand erect on both feet, one close to another, then turn the head slightly toward one shoulder—say the right—and keep it there a little while without thinking of which foot he wants to move. He will soon see whether his weight will not, without any voluntary effort on his part, increase toward the left side, and his right foot consequently become lighter to that extent, and therefore also whether it will not acquire to that extent greater freedom of movement.

The identical thing then occurs with the horse. It is consequently necessary that his head be slightly turned towards the side of the “lead,” especially when his hind-quarters (haunches) are also inclined to that side, else all his forepart’s weight bearing on that foot, he would lead on it less easily, if not with greater difficulty, than if that weight were transferred on to the other foot by reason of the slight turn of the head towards the leading foot. Another demonstration of the necessity of turning the horse’s head toward the foot on which he is to canter is offered by ballet dancers who *have* to turn the head toward the side of the foot which they lift and thrust forward. (*Fig. 82.*)

The canter being, as already stated, a well balanced, slow, boatlike gait, the horse must be prepared for it by a few preliminary steps of short yet high walk, on tip-toes as it were, that in technical language is called “Collected walk.” (*Fig. 54.*)

The number of such steps may be diminished to just

one, or even suppressed altogether, according to the degree of the animal's training, and also according to the extent of the rider's knowledge and tact. Although this is an elementary book affording no place for the detailed explanation of the methods employed to obtain the complete collection, the principle of what this word means, to both horse and man, must be set down here in order



FIG. 82.

Girl dancing, turning the head, as is natural, toward the side of the foot she is lifting.

that the reader have a slight idea of what he is supposed to be aiming at.

The collection is then *the centralization of the horse's forces under his rider*, whence he (the rider) can dispose of them at will, in one direction or another, and in any manner he sees fit. (*Figs. 83 and 84; also 54.*)

Thus, when the horse is perfectly collected he is com-

pletely at his rider's disposal, and can do whatever is required of him, with but a shadow of effort on his part, and mere indications on the part of his rider.

The collection is obtained from a well trained horse by the rider's using both "aids" back of the girths, in such way—that is to say: with such tapping, or pressure, as the case may be—as to cause the animal's hindquarters to become more active, and advance more under him. Mean-

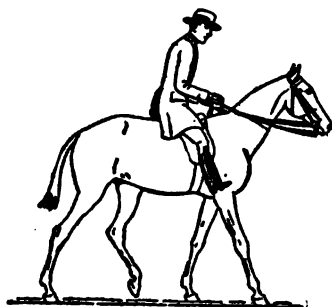


FIG. 83.

Horse uncollected, forces scattered; rider incorrectly placed. Notice ungainliness of the whole outfit.



FIG. 84.

Same horse collected, forces centralized; ready to start cantering on the right lead; rider's position correct, with left leg ready to urge his mount into the canter. Notice elegance of both man and horse.

while the increased speed this leg action produces is simultaneously checked by an adequate lifting of the hands (or possibly of the fingers only if both rider and horse are sensitive to that degree) which combined action, when well harmonized, obtains the animal's perfect flexibility and lightness from end to end: mouth to tail, therefore his perfect poise. (Figs. 54 and 84.)

Thus, while the horse's hindquarters are activated, and

his foreparts are simultaneously prevented from running forward, the animal is bound to advance on a diminished (otherwise termed collected) basis. When this aim is achieved the rider has the sensation of being on a higher horse, free and untrammelled, tiptoeing on front and hind feet simultaneously, and ready to obey his rider's lightest indications; a sensation which, once realized, can never be forgotten.

He will consequently feel his horse become absolutely supple, and so light of mouth that, literally *only the weight of the reins* will suffice to guide and control him, and the display of not more than a similarly small amount of strength from his lower limbs will be sufficient for his mount to do whatever he wishes. This is then the instant at which a horse may be started correctly into the canter by means of a well-defined staccato action of both legs, the opposite—as a rule—carried farther back along the horse's flank than the other (consequently the rider's *left* leg when the horse has to canter on the *right* lead, and vice versa). If on starting cantering the horse manifests a tendency to throw part of his body exaggeratedly or violently to one side, let us say a haunch, or sometimes a shoulder, out of the line of his longitudinal axis, the rider will have to use slightly different means in each of these two cases, while nevertheless following the general indications given in the preceding paragraph to obtain the collection. The slightly different means alluded to are the following:

(1) In case the horse throws a haunch to one side—which is oftener the right haunch than the left—the rider will have to use his right leg either with more energy than the left: or he will have to slip it more backward along the horse's flank, or he may even for a time have to use it exclusively while allowing his other leg to re-

main in the position "at rest." He must then not request the canter until his mount gets completely straightened out, and gains sufficient control over himself to lean the haunches only very slightly to the side on which it is intended that he should canter. (*Fig. 84.*)

(2) In case the horse throws a shoulder to one side—which occurs oftener with the left shoulder than with the right—the rider will have to insist a little more on the animal's flexing on the left side of the jaw and neck, even if the horse has to canter on the right lead. And to this effect (*a*) he will have to upturn the left hand a little more, so as to bring its third and fourth fingers—and consequently the reins held thereby—into greater action (*Fig. 41*) (not of necessity involving greater strength nor turning the horse's head to the left if he is to canter "right.") (*b*) He will simultaneously make some "oppositions to the shoulders" with those (left) reins, as when wishing to make the horse turn to the right; and (*c*) he will nine times out of ten find it necessary to use the legs similarly (or at least somewhat similarly) to the manner advised in the preceding paragraph for the overcoming of the animal's right haunch-thrust, because oftener than not the right haunch then thrusts out simultaneously with the left shoulder, although in opposite directions. When this occurs the horse is said to be "traversed." Consequently he will actually in such a case start the horse cantering on the right lead—let us say—by means of his right leg instead of the left.

It goes without saying that in this case also as soon as the animal's shoulders will have been equalized, the rider's left hand will resume acting like the right one either temporarily, if the improvement is only of a passing character, or constantly if it is permanent.

The reasons for the horse's acting thus are generally

the following: (1) In the case of the right haunch thrust it is because either the man's left leg—whether it be the actual rider's or some previous rider's—has been used more constantly, more vigorously or more effectively than the right one. This occurs usually on account of its being by nature the stronger of the two, or because of its having acquired more strength through being the one exclusively used for mounting; or the haunch-thrust may result from the horse's having been much ridden side-saddle, without his rider having paid attention to the unbalancing action of her working leg (her left leg) and consequently without having tried to offset that leg's action by the judicious use of a riding whip on her mount's right flank. (2) In the case of the horse carrying a shoulder out of the straight line—as already stated, usually the left shoulder rather than the right—the reasons are that the rider, whether the actual one or some of the previous ones, has had the tendency to use the hands unequally. The right hand is usually the offender in such cases, on account of its being the ablest, as a result of the greater use made of it by most of us for the generality of things we have to perform in ordinary life.

(It is consequently necessary that the rider pay very good attention that all his limbs work equally, at his will, and that he train them with the greatest care not only to work equalized but also to be equally well under his control; failing this he will render all the horses he rides crooked and unbalanced, conditions most disagreeable for him, and most prejudicial to those animals' length of service.)

To resume: in order to make a horse canter the rider must (1) obtain a collected walk; (2) he must lean his shoulders backward, increasing slightly the weight of his

seat on the opposite side of the foot he will have decided to make his horse canter on; (3) he must turn the horse's head, by a flexion, not by a pull, slightly towards the side of that foot; (4) by means of the opposite leg sent backward along the horse's flank simultaneously with the turning of the animal's head, and used in such a way as to obtain the desired result, he must push his mount's hindquarters very slightly to the side of the foot he is to canter on; (5) at the moment he feels the horse ready to go, he must, by activating both legs, one slightly more backward than the other, "determine" the canter by causing his mount to give a little bound forward.

As the horse starts cantering the rider must *instantaneously* release *any* rein-tension which may exist, and give complete freedom to the animal's mouth, resuming the use of the reins *only* in order to regulate his mount's gait, so as either to smooth it, or to guide his horse towards where it is intended he should go.

After the horse has started cantering, and while he continues cantering, the rider must keep his legs continuously in the position necessary for the determination of the canter, close enough to be ready for use in case the horse lags, or threatens either breaking into the trot, or changing feet. They must also be kept ready for use *in advance* of any hand action that the rider may have to perform during the canter, such as those necessary for obtaining flexions, etc.

Because, unless the rider, being very tactful, uses only just the amount of "aids" necessary, and not a hair's weight more, to make his mount canter, the horse will or may pull a little at the start, and then the rider may have to use the hands with a little more strength. If he then uses them without having the legs ready to instantaneously counteract their action, nine times out of ten the

horse will stop cantering, and will have to be made to begin all over again, a superfluous waste of energy for horse as well as man, often irritating to both.

In order to regulate the canter and to slow it down—especially if the horse is in the least bent on going faster than desired—the rider has only to obtain flexions.

By obtaining flexions a diminution of speed is effected because the rider, having to elevate the hands in order to obtain flexions, simultaneously obtains the elevation of the animal's head and neck, which has a checking effect on the horse, as explained before, where directions are given how to stop the horse and demonstrated by *Fig. 43*.

Besides that, flexions obtained at the canter supple the horse still more effectively than those obtained at the walk and at the trot, and thus, provided, of course, they are well done, they give the rider a still greater control over his mount.

In order to be well done, flexions at the canter must be sought and obtained with greater tact and delicacy, with greater harmony between hand and leg actions, than at the walk and at the trot, and with ever increasing tact, delicacy, and harmony, as the horse becomes finer and more responsive to his rider's means of action.

Therefore while, as already stated, the rider's "aids" should be kept close enough to his mount's flanks to be ready, to give him, without any delay, the quantity and quality of touch necessary to counterbalance the effect of the hand's action, and maintain the horse at the canter, they ought not to be kept so sharply or heavily close to the animal as to excite him unnecessarily.

If the rider were not to control and regulate to a nicety the action of his aids, their disordinateness, or excess of strength would therefore, either annul the result of the hands' action, or compel the rider not to use the hands

with increasing delicacy, but to use them with absolutely unnecessary vigor or strength.

This would, in turn, induce the horse to pull and become hard-mouthed at the canter, and thus, instead of being a means of rendering him more flexible and controllable, the canter would actually lead him on to become hardmouthed: the first step toward becoming what is termed "runaway."

Per contra, the study of the discreet use of the hands and legs at the canter, will increase the rider's delicacy of touch, and prepare him to approach higher Equestrian problems with a facility proportionate to the application, perseverance, and discrimination (and, of course, patience) he will have previously displayed in learning to use hands and legs correctly at the walk and at the trot—as well as, in the present case, at the canter.

It often occurs, especially to a novice-rider that, in consequence of lack of definiteness in leg-action (not necessarily in their lack of vigor or strength), or of lack of harmony between hands and legs, or for any other reason, the horse starts trotting, and continues trotting, instead of cantering, as desired.

In such a case the animal must be immediately compelled to walk; and as soon as he walks again, that he flexes and "tiptoes" (collects) a little, he must be made to canter afresh, the least possible space of time being allowed to intervene between his failure to canter and his resumption of the gait.

If the failure to canter occurs through the horse's initiative (or fault) he must be compelled to resume cantering by means of more vigorous leg-action, even to the extent of a sharp "attack" of the legs, placed in their respectively correct position (one farther back than the other), and *if necessary*, even by means of a more or less

sharp cut of the riding-whip applied behind the rider's thigh.

But if the horse fails to start cantering through the rider's fault, then the observance of better co-ordination between hands and legs must be more strictly adhered to, wherewith to bring about a higher degree of collection.

When, under such circumstances—that is, whether due to the man's or to the beast's fault—the rider has to compel his mount to walk before making him canter again, *he must not*, during the time he is making the horse walk, *displace the leg propulsive of the lead he wants to make the horse canter on*. Consequently he must not displace the left leg if the lead desired was the right, and, vice versa, the right leg for the left lead.

On the contrary: while the horse is being compelled to walk, the rider's "working" leg must be placed back in such a manner as to continue maintaining the animal's haunches very slightly inclined to the side of the desired "lead." Because: if the horse's haunches are not kept thus inclined at that moment, the rider, besides trying to obtain the walk, will have to return his mount's haunches to the desired position, and then get him to canter again (which he may again refuse), a complex exertion which ought to be, and can be, avoided by the simple process alluded to.

For the same reason, when returning to the walk under those circumstances, the horse's head ought to be constantly kept slightly turned to the side of the lead desired. In consequence of these precautions he will be quite ready, both in forepart and hindquarters, to start afresh cantering correctly when the rider will repeat the indication for him to do so. It also occurs that notwithstanding the rider's efforts, and the horse's being correctly placed, the animal does not start on the desired foot, but

by a quick movement, suddenly displaces his body, and starts cantering—generally with a rush—on the undesired lead. This is usually due to one of the two following causes:

(A) Either the horse has been so accustomed to canter on one leg that he finds it exceedingly difficult to canter on the other, or

(B) He has one of the two legs principally used for that lead incapacitated, either the front leg, or oftener the hind diagonal leg, for which reason it may be well nigh impossible for him to canter on that particular lead.

If this occurs through the first cause, a little patience on the rider's part, and perseverance in insisting on the horse cantering on the lead he does not want to, by the means already prescribed joined to a little coerciveness, will obtain the desired result. In such a case when the horse eventually starts cantering on the desired foot, he must be allowed to canter a little faster than would otherwise be advisable (although he must not be allowed to *gallop* fast). This must be allowed him (1) because to try to have him regulate the canter on a lead unfamiliar to him would be adding to his—and consequently to his rider's—difficulties and (2) because the fact of letting him go unhindered at a little faster canter on this unfamiliar lead will enable him to extend his limbs and muscles more than if he cantered slowly, and will thus make him gain more confidence in the use of that particular lead, besides better preparing those unused muscles for future suppling and control, as result of a more marked movement forward.

But, when after a few strides (or more) of the unfamiliar lead, the rider will have ascertained that the horse is settling to the gait, he must reward him, *while he is in it*, by both caresses and compliments.

(The horse likes the human voice, especially when its owner knows how to modulate it according to requirements, and render it sympathetic; as therefore much can be obtained from him by its use, there is no valid reason for not employing this God-given means when necessary.)

Under this circumstance there are two ways of caressing the horse, only the first of which will be given in this book, as the other one, having to be used with discretion, can be placed at the disposal of advanced riders only.

In this way of caressing the horse the four reins must be placed in one hand—preferably of course in the left—and with the other hand the rider will softly caress the horse's neck, while speaking to him in a gentle, soothing, and encouraging tone of voice.

The rider must take care not to make the horse canter too much on an unaccustomed lead, as the animal will be apt to get sooner tired cantering on it, than he would cantering on the lead he is accustomed to. (Just as we get sooner tired employing muscles we are not in the habit of using than when employing these.)

After a few minutes—say four or five—of canter on this lead, the rider will make the horse return to the walk gradually by which is meant that he will slow down the canter stride by stride, and not by any quick action; still less by any sharp pulling up. To do this he will use the voice also, in order to make his mount take the slower gait, while eliminating much of the necessity of using the hands. As soon as the horse will walk, the rider will again caress and compliment him, in the manner prescribed above.

After a little walk, and flexing at the walk, the rider will, according to circumstances, make the horse canter

again on the same lead. The "circumstances" referred to are not only a question of the condition of the road, and length of the ride, but also one of the horse's mental condition, if such a word as mentality is deemed "the thing" where the horse, considered by many unintelligent, is concerned.

Thus: if the horse has become excited on account of that canter, it will be necessary either to wait until he is completely calmed before making him canter anew on the unfamiliar lead; or it may be even advisable not to repeat that canter again, whether for quite a while during that ride, or perhaps for the whole ride.

If then the horse is in a fit condition to resume cantering, another few minutes of that same (unfamiliar) lead may be given him, with the observance of the same rules for rewarding him, etc.; and after another tempo of walk, another few minutes of the same canter might be again advisable.

But whether it be repeated, twice or more, the canter on the unfamiliar lead must not be indulged in to satiety, and the horse fatigued thereby, because he would get disgusted at it for the reasons already explained, just as a man, when he gets tired of doing a thing he is not accustomed to.

If the rider has to use that particular horse more or less consecutively—as for example, if it belongs to him—he ought not to allow him to canter on the leg he was accustomed to, until he breaks as easily into the canter on the lead with which he was unfamiliar as he broke on the other.

When this equalization will have taken place the rider will do well to be careful about making the horse canter alternately on one lead and on the other, as already advised. A rider who has the use of a horse only for one

ride will do quite as well to act in the manner just prescribed as if the horse belonged to him because: (1) by doing so he will increase his own knowledge of, and efficiency in, horsemanship; (2) he will delay by that much the premature using up of a set of horse-legs, and incidentally the animal's consequent suffering; (3) he will conserve property to that extent, a thing which each and everyone of us ought to do, whether the property is ours or someone else's.

If the horse has one of the two legs principally used for that lead incapacitated, it will be advisable for the rider, after some fruitless trials, to give up trying, as in all probability the animal experiencing pain, added to discomfort in attempting to canter on an unfamiliar, and for the above reasons distasteful, lead, may defend himself more or less vigorously and make bad matters worse, especially if his rider be practically a novice.

(If such a horse be offered him for sale, a person ought not to buy him, as he would be unsound, either with a splintered, or otherwise damaged foreleg, or oftener, with a spavined hindleg.)

People are often puzzled to know, when on horseback, on what lead their mount is cantering. While at first this seems pretty difficult to find out with any degree of accuracy, the observance of the following rule, and the experience gained by practice, will render it easy enough. By applying this rule: one learns not only to realize on which lead one's horse is *actually* cantering, but also on which one he is *going* to canter *before* he breaks into that gait.

So: when a rider has acquired sufficient knowledge and tact to be able to tell whether his mount is ready to break into the canter on the lead he wants him to take, he can prevent his mount from taking that gait until his

legs are so placed, and his forces so disposed, as to lead on the desired foot, and start at the precise moment indicated by him. As, in order to start cantering, a horse has to advance the shoulder with which he is about to lead, and has consequently to similarly displace the same side's haunch, the rider will know on what foot the horse is going to canter (or is actually cantering) when he will feel one of the halves of his seat carried slightly ahead of the other, by reason of the advance of the animal's leading shoulder, but especially by reason of the displacement of his mount's haunches toward the side of his leading foot. (See explanations in this chapter, page 238.)

If then the rider feels that the right half of his seat as also his right shoulder, is more or less suddenly twisted on a line rather forward of that on which are the left half of his seat and his left shoulder, he will know that his mount is cantering, or is going to canter, on the right lead. (Vice versa of course for the left lead.) Moreover: this leg of the "leading" side will display more motion than the other, and he will therefore experience more difficulty to keep its heel low, than to keep the other heel under control. It is consequently "useless," "unadvisable," and "ungraceful" for a rider to look down toward the horse's feet in order to ascertain on which lead he is cantering or is going to canter, as this manner of acting demonstrates his lack of tact and knowledge of horsemanship.

This manner of acting is "useless" because, as we have seen, a rider can ascertain things for himself in a much more horsemanlike and intelligent manner, by the *tact of the seat*. (It is therefore *essential* for a rider to develop and cultivate this tact of the seat, as by its means he can feel, even apart from the canter, what the horse may be

preparing to do before he actually does it, and thus be in a position, either to second this action if it has been desired, or to counteract if it undesirable.)

That manner of acting is "unadvisable" because, by the very fact of his bending to look toward the foot he expects his mount to lead with, the rider curves his hip inward, and by weighing on this side, inclines the horse to the opposite side by means of his seat. It follows that he even actually pushes him by bringing the direct leg, instead of the opposite one, closer to the animal's flank in consequence of the displacement of his seat, caused by the bend of the shoulders. Moreover: by bending to look forward, he increases the weight on his mount's shoulders, precisely on the shoulder on which he wants him to canter, thereby as already stated, making it that much more difficult for the horse to elevate the forepart so as to start cantering. That manner of acting is "ungraceful" because, just at the moment the horse starts into a graceful gait, his rider mars the picture by exchanging an elegant and normal torso-deportment for one both inelegant and abnormal, unless he, unfortunately, be a hunchback.

As a result of this ugly and illogical manner of carrying the torso just at the moment they want their horses to canter, riders cause them to start: nine times out of ten on the wrong lead; nine out of the ten times they happen to start on the correct foreleg their corresponding diagonal hindleg goes wrong, and the start is mixed; besides that: whether they be wrong, right, or mixed, instead of cantering gracefully, harmoniously, and in poise, from their very first stride, they usually start either with a bound, or with a rush, cannon-ball fashion.

CHAPTER XIX

INCORRECT BREAKING FROM THE TROT TO THE CANTER, AND MEANS OF CORRECTING THIS

As previously said: among the mistakes most commonly committed by uninformed or misinformed riders is that of allowing their horses to break from the trot into the canter and sometimes back again from the canter into the trot. Apart from being incorrect, because of teaching the horse to go just as he pleases (which must never be permitted him) this mistake also tends to destroy the steadiness of his trot, and therefore to minimize the possibility of its development in height, energy, elegance or, especially, speed.

The trot being *the* gait whereby both the saddle and the carriage horse's qualities are the most enhanced and developed, it is necessary that everything be done to better it, and, consequently, that nothing be done, or even allowed the horse, which may in any way diminish his chances of improvement. (*Figs. 26, 75 and 76.*)

The steadiness of the trot, and the possibility of travelling fast at this gait, being one of the numerous pleasures attendant on correct riding on horseback, it is to the rider's advantage that his horse be able to continue trotting steadily during reasonably long periods—compatible with his staying powers—and that he should also be able to go fairly fast, say the mile in three minutes or thereabouts—without threatening to break into the canter every once in a while. (*Fig. 59.*)

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Moreover, as the constant changing from one gait to another is detrimental to the maintenance of the animal's poise and equilibrium, and consequently prejudicial to the proper usage of his legs, it is absolutely necessary that the steadiness of the horse's trot be always culti-



FIG. 85.

Horse checked incorrectly by brutal pull that throws his weight on the hocks, causing strain of every part,—fore- and hind-legs; back; neck and head, even the abdomen.

vated by the rider desirous to keep his mount's legs sound as long as possible.

(The above, of course, does not apply to the changing of gaits at the rider's will, which when correctly executed are beneficial to the horse from all viewpoints.)

There are three means of combating this disagreeable

tendency to "break" which some horses manifest more than others, principally on account of their riders' having disregarded its growth, either by ignorance or by negligence. Two of these means correct the horse of this bad habit very effectively, sometimes even permanently.

Of the three means alluded to, one, and precisely the one most in use, is incorrect, and ineffective; moreover if employed brutally, it is detrimental to the horse's legs, particularly to his hocks; the other two means are good, one better than the other, but as the better of the two can be used only by advanced riders, and then only on horses which, having already undergone a certain amount of training, are well balanced and sensitive to the "aids," it has no place in this elementary book.

The first—and bad—means is for the rider to check the horse, and either after having stopped him completely, or after having allowed him a few steps of walk, to start him trotting again.

It is bad, because: *unless* the stopping is done very gradually, delicately and cleverly, it causes the animal to throw his weight on the hocks (*Fig. 85*), and consequently to develop the movement backward which, as often repeated, should never be favored.

Besides this undesirable result, the animal's weight being brought to bear in an unnatural manner on the hocks, these being propellers—as their conformation shows, and their springlike action proves—react against the unintelligent distribution of weight reversed on them, perhaps somewhat brutally, and, reacting, repel it forward afresh.

This repulsion is effected in a manner directly proportionate (*a*) to the amount of surplus weight which will have been thrown on to them, and (*b*) to the decisive-

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ness, vigor, or strength with which this "throwing-on" will have been executed.

Thus it will be generally observed that when a rider checks his mount in this incorrect way the animal starts cantering again as soon as the hand-pressure on his jaw is released, and it is only with difficulty (sometimes with great difficulty) that he resumes trotting.

In order to avoid causing a horse to break into the canter from the trot, it is necessary, first of all, not to "out-trot" him, that is to say: not to make him trot faster than his conformation permits.

The experienced horseman usually realizes, practically at a glance, whether the conformation of a horse's shoulders, back, and hindquarters, the good proportion of his legs to his body, and their correct position under it, as well as their practical soundness, will permit him to trot more or less fast.

But as everybody is not an "experienced horseman" and cannot therefore say beforehand whether a horse is or is not a fast trotter, it is good to know that with a little practice, the rider of average intelligence, endowed with an average amount of horsesense, will easily learn to feel when his mount has reached the limit of his trotting ability, or when he is about to break . . . which is not always the same thing, as many horses break much before reaching this limit . . . especially, of course, those who have been allowed to do so.

Some horses will develop their trot very much better and go very much faster when ridden by certain riders who have enough knowledge, tact, and energy, to make them reach this limit without breaking, but they will "hitch," and trot unevenly, excepting at a slow gait, when ridden by other parties, although their conformation and other desiderata may be such as to qualify them as good

trotters. Other horses again will break, either at a slow trot, or at a fast one, not because of their conformation, nor through any fault of their rider's, but simply when their fancy impels them. This is mostly due to their having been allowed—or even taught—to do so by some uninformed or careless rider—as already stated.

When a horse breaks into the canter because of having been out-trotted the remedy is to slow him down by *checking the leg on which he will have broken*. This is effected by the simple process of elevating with a slight tension the curb-rein of the side of the foot he will have broken on and of releasing it *as soon as* he trots again, allowing him then to go but paying attention not to out-trot him afresh.*

When a horse breaks into the canter without having been out-trotted, he usually throws (or leans) the haunch of the leading-side he breaks into. Then the rider, besides checking this leading foot as above, will use the leg of that same side in order to push the animal's haunches back into the line longitudinally parallel with its relative shoulder. When a rider realizes that his mount has a habitual tendency to do this, he has only to keep the leg corresponding to the horse's erring side, closer to, or farther back along, his mount's flank, thus rendering it practically impossible for him to push that haunch, and consequently advance, that shoulder and therefore to break into the canter on that lead. This is the second and better manner of correcting a horse from breaking into the canter.

* When a horse is caused to trot faster than he can—technically termed "out-trotted,"—he usually "hitches" with one leg,—preferably a foreleg,—before breaking into the canter, and a timely check on this "hitch" will prevent the "break." Some horses, nevertheless, "break" without previously "hitching."

CHAPTER XX

STANDING

Although most persons will consider it absurd and useless that anything be said with respect to the horse's standing still, a little light on the subject seems appropriate, because so few appreciate how important it is that a horse know how to stand; that the rider know how his mount should stand; that he realize when the animal is standing correctly or incorrectly; and that he know what to do when his mount stands either correctly or incorrectly.

Quite as well as it is advisable that a horse should not be made to go always at the same gait, it is also advisable that, especially during the course of a long ride, he should be allowed, or even made, to stand still. This procedure will thus permit him to enjoy at least partial rest, and will consequently ensure his returning on his journey with greater zest, or less weariness, as the case may be, but at any rate with a chance of affording greater satisfaction to his rider than if he had not been allowed this breathing spell.

(During the process of training, a horse ought similarly to be made to stand still several times in the course of every lesson, not only in order that he should rest, but also in order that he should collect his thoughts and thus have a better understanding of what is required of him.

Whatever the reason for a horse's being made to "stand," the good rider should see to it that his mount always stands correctly. When a horse stands correctly, he distributes his weight equally on each of his legs, because of their being placed squarely under him. In this position he is better able to carry his rider's weight which, bearing equally on every one of his limbs, does not tire any one of them more than the others. (*Figs. 86 and 86a.*)

This square legged position is consequently the best

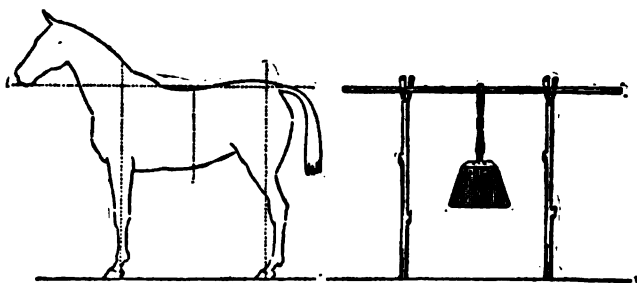


FIG. 86.

FIG. 86a.

Horse standing squarely (correctly); back normal; legs supporting weight normally. *Demonstration of effect of weight on horse's back when standing squarely (correctly).*

the horse can maintain whenever he stands, but especially is it the best for him to be in at the moment the rider mounts him, and once mounted it is the best for him to keep until the necessary signal is given him to move. Therefore the habit some persons have of making horses stretch out fore and aft, at the moment of being mounted, or when just standing, is not only incorrect, but is also injurious to the animal's limbs as well as to their backs.

The stretched position is injurious to their limbs because when they stand thus instead of having their

weight (and their rider's if they are mounted) carried directly by the feet, which are their natural supports, they have it bearing first and more fully on the tendons and the hocks, and only indirectly, and consequently less completely, on the feet, as a result of which tendons are sprung, hocks spavined, and limbs in general prematurely ruined.

The injury to horses' backs is consequential to the

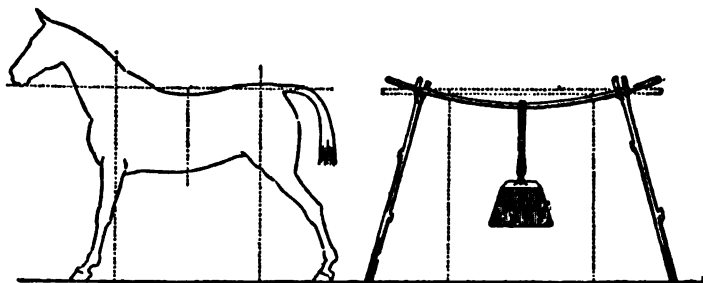


FIG. 87.

FIG. 87a.

Horse standing stretched-out (incorrectly). Notice weakening of back, by hollowing, also strain on tendons and hocks.

Demonstration of effect of weight on horse's back when standing stretched (incorrectly). Although not influencing it when stand is correct (Fig. 86a) the weight causes it to lower and to hollow still more than if not carried (as per second dotted line), when the stand is stretched.

hollowing out of this part of their anatomies resulting from this stretched-out position. Anything which loses compactness by stretching, weakens to that extent; thus nobody requires to be a horseman in order to understand that a horse's back when stretched is weaker, and consequently less able to carry weight, than when it is not stretched. (Figs. 87 and 87a.)

For this purely mechanical reason a hollowbacked (swayback) horse is not chosen as a carrier by any horseman looking for a saddlehorse, unless this serious defect be counterbalanced by remarkable qualities, notably: closeness of coupling, and powerful lumbar muscles. How then persons should voluntarily render horses swaybacked, at any time, by artificial means and should especially do so at the moment of their being mounted, is one of those anomalies for which no valid reason can be given.

Of course a horse who has been taught to stretch at the time of being mounted is easier to be gotten on—owing to his sinking lower to the ground, than if he did not know how to stretch. But then, in order that he suffer no injury from it, he should be further taught to begin moving the hind feet forward from the stretched to the normal position, *just as soon as, in the act of mounting, the rider's right foot has left the ground*, in order that, by the time the man reaches his back, this part of his body be not hollowed any longer, and that therefore the additional weight to be supported by it be distributed equally on the four feet, at the instant the rider's seat reaches the saddle. It will then be comprehensible that for a horse to do this properly he must be very carefully trained because, not only must he be taught to stand perfectly still as soon as his hindfeet have reached their normal place of support but he must also be taught to move his hindlegs forward pretty swiftly in order to synchronize the reaching of their correct place of support with the time the rider takes to leap from the ground on to his back.

But, while a very finely trained horse may be taught to behave thus, so as to permit of his rider's mounting more easily, he must never be taught to stretch under any

other circumstances, for the reasons of conservation already advanced.

As soon as the horse is stopped, the rider must avoid touching his mouth by the slightest hand-action—excepting if he requires to obtain a flexion—and therefore the reins, while preferably not abandoned, must be

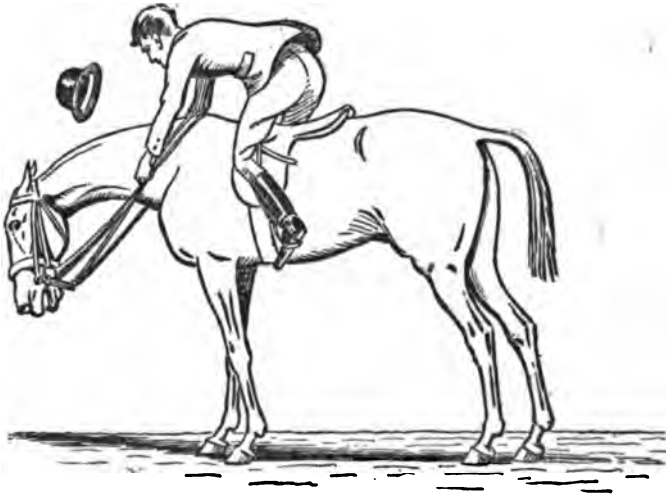


FIG. 88.

Horse's down-and-out rein-tug, and its—not infrequent—unsightly result on the rider.

allowed to float so completely as not to bear—excepting by their own weight—on their respective irons.

The non-observance of this important rule is mainly responsible for so many horses contracting the habit of suddenly extending the neck, tugging on the reins, and disporting themselves at times still more unwarrantably, instead of remaining quiet while stopped or in the act of

being stopped, *i.e.*, at a time when it would seem easier than under any other circumstance for them to remain quiet.

This bad habit is disagreeable to the rider because of its tendency to pull him, more or less, out of the saddle; and it is unsightly to the onlooker because of the very unbecoming position into which, time and again, it forces the rider, who at those short intervals is jerked sprawling over his mount's withers—sometimes even over his neck—suggesting the possibility of his falling off at any minute. (*Fig. 88.*)

While the manner of not giving a horse this bad habit is not to touch his mouth once he is stopped, the manner of curing him of it is to touch one of the reins, twice, in rapid succession, *but as lightly as possible, with the finger* holding that rein. This should be done preferably on the rein with which the animal is in the habit of pulling the most when in motion.

If he has no particular rein on which he habitually pulls, and if this action requires repetition, it ought to be repeated not on the same rein always, but on different reins every two or three occasions or so. If this is properly done, the horse will very soon, probably in not more than a couple of lessons, completely desist from the habit. In the execution of this means of correction *only the fingers* must be used, consequently neither hand nor wrist must come into play, much less elbow or arm, as too many riders are apt to do. And only *two* sharp, light flashes, not strong enough to influence any other part of the horse's body than his lower jaw, must be administered on each occasion, without the rider's manifesting meanwhile in the "modus" of any other part of his own body, the slightest sign of impatience or anger, his whole attitude, on the contrary, having to be one of

the greatest calm and relaxation. *Only the finger* must act.

As stated elsewhere, horses contract the bad habit of not standing still to be mounted even after having been taught to stand, and something must be said here respecting the means of overcoming the contracted bad habit.

Initially, this ought to be attended to on its slightest manifestation, consequently before it grows into dangerous forms such as rearing, bucking, or cowkicking, as then its eradication requires as much if not more, careful and experienced handling as the teaching of standing to a colt. Wherefore it cannot be explained in this book, written for elementary riders only.

Many people believe that a horse is better taught to stand still to be mounted by not having at first someone to hold him from on foot for the rider. This is wrong because the tactful assistance of a person holding him from on foot enables the rider to teach him to stand or to cure him of the habit of moving very much sooner than if he were to attempt it alone. This besides prevents both horse and rider from losing quite a little patience.

The person controlling the horse from the ground will then take hold of the snaffle reins and the stirrup (just as prescribed, page 72, in the advice to grooms) and will speak to the animal either kindly, or with severity, according to the animal's disposition. Some horses calm down when spoken to coaxingly, while others require to be threatened, and spoken to with severity; and a few require even to be corporally punished.

If the horse does not stand still to be mounted in consequence of the foregoing appeals from the voice, a light, very rarely a sharp, "call" of the snaffle-reins from the

person on foot will often prove effective in producing the desired effect, at least for a short time; and when the result is obtained the horse must be immediately caressed and spoken to approvingly, in order that he understand what is wanted of him, and learn to realize when he is "doing the right thing." But this "call" of the reins—a very diminutive "yank," let us say—must never be strong enough to influence any other part of the horse's body than his lower jaw, and it must be given just in time to synchronize with the movement of one of his feet, the motion of which, if the slight "yank" be properly executed, it will effectively stop.

And so, unless the horse makes a decisive and continued effort to walk away, the snaffle-rein action must not be "sustained" and the horse's mouth must be left as undisturbed as possible, whether by the mounting rider's hand, or by the hand of the person holding him from on foot.

According to the animal's disposition, it may be advisable not to be too insistent on his absolute immobility after he is mounted the first time this is attempted; but after a couple of lessons of this sort—given possibly in the same session—he must be required to stop perfectly immovable for a very short while. As he gets more accustomed to do so, the periods of his being kept "stock still" will be gradually increased until he remains four or five minutes immovable with the rider on his back.

As he will become more amenable, the person holding him from on foot will gradually loosen his hold, consequently keep the right hand on the reins but at a farther distance from the horse's mouth, therefore relying more for the animal's quiescence, on his or the rider's voice—appeals, if necessary. In order that these be effective they will have to be modulated from coaxing to threaten-

ing, to scolding, to approving, or to caressing, according as the animal obeys or not, and according to his temperament, because even when they have not obtained satisfactory results in the first instance, the continuance of voice appeals, joined to the snaffle-rein action, prove successful in the majority of cases.

As the horse will show less impatience on being mounted, and stand still more easily with the rider on, the person on foot will first pretend holding him by merely keeping his hand and arm extended towards the rein; then he will gradually move away from him, further and still further until he leaves him completely, which is usually possible sooner than this explanation implies.

During the whole period of this process of accustoming (or possibly re-accustoming) a horse to stand still to be mounted, the rider must never allow him to go forward of his own volition when once he has begun to eliminate manifestations of impatience; and if he feels that the horse, although not moving from a given spot, has yet the least thrill of impatience, either when in the act of being, or any time after having been, mounted, he must not allow him to move until he has quite calmed down again.

To that effect, the rider must never, especially during this period of instruction, jump on the horse's back and rush away in a "Wild-and-woolly-west-moving-picture" style: nor must he ride with inconsiderate people who get away as soon as mounted without paying attention whether by so doing they cause the accompanying horses to become excited, and to be more or less unmanageable at the often critical moment of being mounted, thus inconveniencing their riders more or less. It is advisable to impress on riders that it is exceedingly bad form, amounting to downright impoliteness, to act thus.

CHAPTER XX

BACKING

In order to back correctly the horse must walk backward as easily, and on a line as straight as when he goes forward. And a thoroughly trained animal mounted by a good rider should be able, while going backward, to turn both right and left, according to the indications given him, with as much ease as he turns when going forward. But for a horse to back in this finished style it is necessary that instead of being made to pull the front feet backward before moving the hind feet, he be taught to move the hind feet first and place them backward one after another, moving backward, simultaneously with each one of these, its corresponding diagonal front foot.

If he were not to move the front feet simultaneously with the hind ones, in diagonal pairs, he would drag the front feet and under these conditions the backing soon ceases, because the weight of the animal's forepart bearing then fully on his tendons, prevents him from bending the knees and consequently from lifting the feet.

Therefore, contrary to what is believed, correct backing is not obtained by simply pulling on the reins with more or less strength, or energy. When this means is resorted to, the horse either braces himself on all fours and refuses to budge: (*Fig. 89*) or throws his haunches this way and that, thus gaining ground more sideways

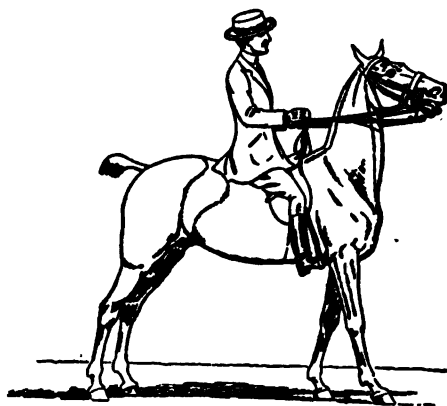


FIG. 89.

Horse bracing himself "fore and aft" to resist backing, and rider tugging at the reins in futile attempts to make him walk backward.



FIG. 90.

Horse thrusting haunch to one side (right), and bracing fore, so as to resist backing; rider's leg correctly placed to straighten the hindquarters.

than backward (*Fig. 90*), often eventually rising more or less on the hind legs in a "pesade" or half-rear; or else he deliberately rears, and then of course no backing is possible.

While the manner of training a horse to back correctly cannot be explained in this elementary book, the manner of making a trained horse walk backward is as follows.

The horse being stopped, the rider will obtain a flexion by the usual means, *i.e.*, by the application of both legs more or less backward of the girths, but in this case without raising the hands too much. When the horse will flex, instead of yielding to him, the rider will continue to sustain the rein-tension—*not increase it*—continuing also the action of the legs proportionately as his mount responds by moving the hind legs.

As the hind feet will move, and will nevertheless, by reason of the continued tension of the reins, be prevented from propelling the front legs forward, they will have to move somewhere, and not being able to move sideways, because of the proximity of each of the rider's legs, they will, of necessity, move backward.

As a result of the backward movement of one of the hind legs, its corresponding diagonal front leg will simultaneously move backward also. On the horse's taking this first half-step backward, the rider's hands will relax slightly, yet will automatically, *but without pulling*, tighten the reins anew in consequence of the resistance offered them by the other diagonal pair of the horse's legs remaining unmovable, which will nevertheless then have a greater tendency to follow.

This other pair's motion constituting the second half-step backward, the rider's hand tension will be automatically obliterated by reason of the total absence of

resistance offered it by the horse. The more easily the horse will have given this first full step, the more easily



FIG. 91.

Horse backing correctly. Notice elevation of hind-foot first (since it is on a higher level than its corresponding diagonal). Rider's legs placed so as to activate the hindquarters; hands not pulling on the reins, merely "sustaining" them.

of course, will he give the second, and then the third, and then the fourth, and so on, practically *ad infinitum*. But precisely on account of this facility in obtaining the

backward walk the rider must abuse neither *leg-action* nor still less *hand-action*, while his mount is in the act of backing.

The rider must never make the horse walk backward fast. He must on the contrary see to it that the horse walk backward very slowly, that he lift the feet as high as possible, bringing them down to the ground as lightly as possible, acting the while with great deliberation, this slowness and deliberation nevertheless not implying that he stop any one of his feet while walking backward. (*Fig. 91.*)

If, for some reason or other, the horse stops the backward movement on any one foot, or diagonal pair of feet, the rider, in order to make him resume backing, must not pull the reins backward more or less vigorously, but must on the contrary *use the legs* and begin the backing all over again, acting then exactly as if the animal had not yet backed.

In case the horse offers at first a certain amount of resistance, he must not be made to go backward more than four or five full steps at a time, if even that many, and must then be rewarded by caresses and oral compliments—but no bribery; he must consequently be made to walk backward neither too far, nor too often, even if he does it easily following that moment of resistance, because too frequent or too lengthy repetitions of backing might either disgust him with it, or teach him to defend himself by backing when unwilling to obey some other of his rider's desires. This vicious defence is among the most dangerous. When the rider wants to cease making the horse walk backward, it is *essential* that he do not stop him on that backward movement, but first bring him forward *without a stop* on any one foot, still less a stop on any diagonal pair of feet intervening between the

backward and the forward walk. And only after his having effected one or two (or preferably more) full steps forward, must the rider make him stop by the usual means, (*i.e.*, legs as well as hands).

This is essential, because: however well the walk backward may be executed; however well trained, and consequently prompt in the movement forward, the horse may be, *every backward motion terminated as such leaves its backward imprint on the horse*, and tends to destroy to that extent the movement forward. And the movement forward should always be encouraged and enhanced rather than diminished in the slightest degree.

By following this advice, and making his mount go forward, were it only a step or two, before ceasing the walk backward, and making him do so without stopping or so much as hesitating on any one foot previous to resuming the movement forward, the careful rider, instead of destroying the movement forward, will actually increase it and consequently improve the animal's balance by causing the same means that sent him backward to bring him forward. So as to obtain this last result with desirable completeness it is necessary that, while the horse is backing freely under him the rider make an exaggerated forward motion with the hands and simultaneously urge the horse forward by an appeal from both legs, slipped more backward than customary along his mount's flanks.

In order to be thoroughly effective, this appeal ought to be also more decisive, or more vigorous, than any made for most other reasons, according to the horse's sensitiveness, to the promptness of his response to the "aids," and according also to the amount of movement forward the rider will desire—or require—to inject into the animal's general make-up.

So that the fullness of the advantages consequential to this manœuvre be obtained, it is necessary that the rider abstain from making any "grab" at the reins in case his mount responds to this forward propulsion more energetically than he had foreseen. Consequently he must regulate that too energetic forward movement to manifest itself gradually. In order not to run the risk of being unbalanced by a too-pronounced forward movement, the rider has simply to relax the shoulders as completely as possible; keep the thighs and knees close; and maintain determinedly the heels low. Thus he will avoid "grabbing," which is undesirable because: were he to "grab" at the reins, and consequently "yank" the horse's mouth, the animal might believe that he had done wrong in answering so promptly to his rider's "aids," or he might fear lest on some similar occasion his mouth be injured by another such "yank"—which horses very rightly abominate—and so for either reason he might later respond less cheerfully to indications of forward movement from his rider's legs, or even not respond at all, which, according to the animal's temperament, might be the beginning of the serious defence called "balking." From this actual refusal of the movement forward, or "balking," to moving forward with a big plunge, or with a rear, there might be only a few intervening steps, according to the animal's nature: sensitiveness, conformation and temperament. And if the "grabbing" were continued or repeated, some high-strung horses who might have been endowed with the greatest tendency to move forward promptly and energetically would be precisely those who, on account of their being high-strung and sensitive, would feel, and resent, ill-treatment the quickest, and consequently make trouble for their riders sooner—and trouble of a more serious import—than

other horses of a more apathetic nature, or calmer temperament.

This exaggeration of the forward movement will be diminished, even perhaps avoided, if, on requesting it, the rider has the precaution of slipping the legs backward with tact, and discretion, decisiveness notwithstanding, also possibly, if while requesting the horse to go forward by means of the legs, he speaks to him in a soothing, modulated, voice.

If the rider follows faithfully these instructions he will in a short time have a horse that will back collected, consequently with floating reins, and will be therefore under still greater control. Moreover, when he will then make him go forward, the horse will do so more freely on account of having already floating reins; and his mouth being unmolested by rein-action he will, eventually, remain longer on floating reins when going forward, if even he does not ultimately remain under these floating-rein conditions practically indefinitely. This is the ideal of correct horsemanship, about which more will be said in the three books following this one.

CHAPTER XXII

RIDING IN COMPANY

One is apt to witness so many incorrect things—the consequences of which may even amount to danger—done by people while riding in company, that a few words on this subject seem advisable. As said elsewhere in this book, when two or more persons ride together, they must not make their individual getaway regardless of what occurs to the other person, or persons, about to ride in their company.

Consequently when several persons are to go riding on horseback together, the ladies in the party as well as the less proficient riders, must be mounted first, together with one or two good riders—preferably male—who, mounted simultaneously, will act as their temporary escorts, and help them keep their horses standing still while the remainder of the party is mounting.

If the mounting-place is not spacious enough to allow of the entirety of the party's horses standing there until the last of them is accommodated and ready to go, the first ones on horseback will move a few steps away, and have their horses stand still there until the others are quite ready to start.

This applies also to children, elderly persons, and those having fractious or impatient horses, who ought also to be mounted first, and allowed to move a few steps away, just enough to make space for the others—and one or two grooms on foot ought to be stationed with them, to

help them keep their mounts quiet, or lend any other necessary assistance until the whole party is ready to move, as already suggested.

But this separation must be only of a few feet, so that the horses in the act of being mounted do not have the slightest excuse of anxiety to join them, and the waiting horses must consequently never be far enough to allow of the possibility of the others' cutting-up, plunging, etc., before reaching, or in order to reach them.

Similarly then, young horses in the process of training, or those who are inclined to be impatient ought, excepting for good reasons to the contrary, to be mounted the first, or among the first, in order that they have a chance of being kept at a perfect standstill, while the other horses of the party are being mounted, and of thus acquiring patience.

It will then be understood that not until the last of the party is conveniently mounted, and ready to "take the field," must any one of them move away, still less rush away, regardless of their consorts. Once all of them ready to go, they will move simultaneously, choosing their partners according to their pleasure or other conditions, or pairing-off according to their mount's requirements. (*Fig. 1, frontispiece.*)

In this respect it may be good to suggest that a very nervous horse ought to be paired-off—excepting for other and better reasons—with a dull horse, rather than with another excitable animal, in order that they may counteract each other's defects, the dull one's placidity having a calming influence on the nervous horse, while the other's ambition will help stimulate the dull one.

Unless there be good reasons for doing otherwise, at least one of the slowest horses of a party must be placed in the lead, in order that the gait being regulated on his,

the faster horses do not outrun the slower, and their riders be thus left behind, possibly in a disagreeable predicament. It must also be kept in mind that by the observance of this precaution slower horses will not be tired out as they inevitably would if travelling at a speed abnormally fast for them.

If there happens to be a kicking horse in a party he must be placed at the extreme rear of the column; and shiers as well as balkers should be placed in the center, or at least behind the first or second couple of horses.

(The English habit of adorning the kicker's tail with a red ribbon is most advisable.)

Considering now the case of only two persons riding together, which is the commonest of everyday occurrences, both riders must wait for each other, even when, as ought always to be the case, the first one to be mounted is of the female sex.

They must consequently leave the mounting place together and at the same gait, and not modify the gait without mutual consent, or at least without giving each other notice of this intention. This is not only horsemanship but common politeness, such as that which everyone observes when going on foot in a third party's company.

If for example two persons plan to take a walk together they will wait for each other to be ready to start, and not rush away as soon as ready, heedless whether their companion is ready or not.

Nor will a well-behaved person walking in company with another rush away from this other one's side, leaving him or her in the lurch, to trail behind as best they can. If one of them has a reason for separating, or going ahead faster, he or she will give notice of it, or ask permission, as the case may be, but not rush away without

saying a word, for this would be the height of impertinence, and the proof of an absolute lack of manners.

Such being the polite custom when two persons are merely walking together, so that no ill-consequence can therefore occur to either through the unexpected separation of the other, it can easily be sensed how much more serious is the offence, when its consequences can be more disagreeable, and at times even dangerous, for the party left behind, than the mere disappointment caused by impolite and inconsiderate treatment!

The story of a disagreeable occurrence caused by this very bad habit to one of the author's former pupils will be a good illustration of what ought *not* to be done when riding in company.

Miss Betsy B——, who had gone West to spend time with friends, was out one day on horseback together with a number of them, and on account of not being a good rider, was not given much of a horse. On the home stretch of a long ride from visiting at another ranch the whole of the party, better mounted than herself, left her, eventually completely alone, either because they were unmindful of any ill consequences, or that they relied on the quietness of her horse to bring her safely home.

Whether the horse got frightened at something, or whether he started disporting himself to rejoin the company, being quite a novice-rider, the young lady was unable to say, but anyhow, she was thrown, and although having fallen not very far behind her companions, she was nevertheless far enough from them for her cries for help not to be heard.

Her erstwhile mount followed them at a certain distance on account of his slower gait, and they, whether or not hearing his footsteps, thinking she was still

bestriding him, never bothered about him, trusting implicitly on his reliability.

When they reached their destination, the unmounted horse, as sometimes occurs, instead of going straight in to the stables with the others, kept loitering around eating grass; and as it was growing dark, he was unseen until, of his own volition, he came to the stable-door.

The stable being separated from the house, the stablemen having been told that Miss B—— would inevitably arrive later were not astonished on seeing the horse return riderless, because of thinking the young lady had dismounted at the house-door, and left the animal to go to the stable by himself, as was often done.

The party within doors, unaware of the horse's return, never bothered about Miss B——'s whereabouts, and it was only when one of them commented on her delay, unusual even with such a slow horse, that they began to wonder. They became really anxious only when they casually learned from one of the stablemen, who had chanced to come that way, that the horse had returned riderless.

A couple of them went forward on foot with lanterns—for it had grown quite dark—while others were having horses saddled. These eventually found the poor girl on foot, miles away, wearily coming homeward—tired out, hungry, and frightened.

All this trouble, anxiety, and disagreeable commotion would not have taken place had only one of that party acted considerately.

When three persons are riding together the unheralded separation of one of them has not the same consequences, because its effect on the other two horses is not the same as when one of two horses leaves the other completely

alone, unless the departing third horse happens to be a very dear friend to one of the remaining two.

But even in such cases, after a little neighing and whinnying, the bereaved horse usually settles down to staid work beside the other one. (This nevertheless has also its exceptions.)

Of course horses usually do not get anxious, or at least do not get so very anxious, when two or three riders meet, and after a while separate. But even then the separation not taking place without warning can be no surprise to the rider thus left alone, even if his horse does manifest at first a little impatience, which is calmed very soon under those circumstances, oftener than not, even without help from the human voice, or other means.

When with a lady—excepting if she be an excellent horsewoman—or with an elderly, or a timid person (or with a child "*cela va sans dire*"), a rider must pay attention not to allow his horse to go faster than the other. This rule should be observed not only for politeness' sake, but also in order not to get that other party's mount excited.

A rider for the same reason must not click the tongue, nor give other vocal means of excitement to his own horse, which might result in overexciting the other horse, and causing disturbance for its rider. If on the contrary the other party's mount is lazy, the better mounted rider should keep his horse just a nose ahead, in order to give the other animal some cause for emulation, and thus relieve its rider—especially if a lady—of the trouble of urging him constantly forward.

In such cases the click of the tongue is permissible, yet only with the other rider's agreement. (Ladies, as a rule, prefer speaking to clicking, and we, as a rule, also

certainly prefer hearing them speak ; we ought then to do the clicking, and let the lady do the speaking!)

Incidentally it may be said that the carefully and well-trained horse will not be disturbed by a third party's click, responding only to his rider's. Some nervous horses are nevertheless upset by anyone's clicking, therefore the polite and considerate rider—in a word the real horseman—will not click when other horses, unless well known to him, are within hearing distance, however much his horse may require to be momentarily animated by that means.

CHAPTER XXIII

CORRECT BEHAVIOR UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES

When riding alone, and consequently in absolute freedom to do as he pleases, a rider must never pass ahead of a lady, an elderly person, or a child (even if they be accompanied) at such a furious gait as to excite that party's mount, nor still less, so close as to collide with it.

Such behavior not only constitutes bad manners, but may cause more or less serious accidents, as horses, even among the gentlest, are apt to resent the sudden onrush of another horse behind them. There have also unfortunately been several instances of runaways occasioned through precisely such causes, with the consequent fall of the rider and resultant injuries.

There also have been instances of riders having been bruised by the too close approach of another horse, and besides this being the height of impoliteness, whether the offended party be a lady or not, the offender may be kicked, either in his person, or in his mount, by the aggrieved horse.

Instead then of acting thus inconsiderately and unwisely, the real horseman must consider himself the born protector of riders less fortunate than himself in ability, courage, or possession of a speedy horse; wherefore, rather than abuse these advantages to the detriment of others, he must use them, not only for his own enjoyment, but also for their good and protection.

Therefore, if when going even at a moderate gait he

notices that his passing has upset another horse, especially if it be ridden by a lady, an elderly, or apparently timid person, or a child, he must speak coaxingly and soothingly *to his own horse*, although doing so in a voice loud enough to be heard by the other animal; he must also slow down his gait a trifle, or even more than a trifle, according to circumstances, and resume his previous speed only when it is apparent to him that the other horse is calmed, or at least on the way to being calmed, conditionally to whether that horse is mounted by a lady, a man, or a child, a good, a bad, or an indifferent, rider.

It goes without saying that if he sees assistance is required by the other rider he must offer it; but, in any case, he must not refuse requested assistance.

He ought also to give assistance if a third party's horse is frightened—even through no fault of his—or if the animal refuses to take a road, or to pass an obstacle; and, excepting in the case of his own horse being, for the same reason, more unmanageable than the other one, he must take the lead, in order that that other horse follow his mount's example, with the minimum of trouble to his rider.

It sometimes occurs that in such a case both horses get panicky, which then only makes matters worse, although usually two horses, even if more than slightly frightened, will pass the cause of their fear more easily, or at least with less difficulty, in company than when alone.

If, as at times also occurs, neither of the riders is able to make his respective mount go in the direction he wants, it is best for one of them to dismount and lead both horses, rather than if, being unable to "fight it out," they should be compelled to allow their mounts to have their own way.

But in such an event the dismounted person must

remount only after reaching a safe distance from the cause of fright, or else, just at the moment he would be preparing to get into the saddle, his horse might take a notion of doing something foolish, and he would then be left stranded, perhaps miles from home, possibly far from any means of rapid communication, and with the dismal perspective, not only of having to walk, but of causing anxiety to his friends or relatives through the return of his mount riderless. It is useless to say that in such a case the rider he has been serviceable to, even if not riding previously in his company, must wait until he be safely and comfortably remounted before going on his way, even if they are not to continue journeying together.

While common sense, politeness, altruism, and the other attributes which constitute the "real" horseman's make-up will guide him, with the help of the rules already given serving as a foundation, in his conduct on other occasions that may offer and which are unforeseen in this little book, it is well to say something about how one should ride, according to place and circumstance. Some of those who have not enjoyed the advantage of proper Equestrian education seem to believe that the very fact of their being on horseback gives them the right to do just as they please, and to disport themselves just as they think fit, regardless of other persons' comfort, pleasure, or security.

Basing themselves on this erroneous mental attitude, they use a park as a race-course, and rush their horses madly headlong, without heed as to the impropriety of such a gait at such a place, nor, as already stated, without considering other riders' discomfort and displeasure, and without thinking of the danger they may thereby place themselves or others in.

Consequently, if a stretch of good, level road lies ahead of them, and no other rider, especially no woman, elderly person, or child, happens to be therein (especially if that rider be going in the same direction); if there are no crossings for pedestrians in that stretch of road; and if they want, or require, to give their horse a little stirring up, it is excusable that they should seize the opportunity offered by this combination of favorable circumstances to make their mount gallop a few minutes as fast as he can.

But they should not allow themselves that liberty in the absence of all that chain of favorable conditions without which the fast gallop constitutes a breach of good form.

In a lone country road a faster gallop than in a park is permissible (*Fig. 78*), but not a racing gallop, unless the conditions previously narrated are also extant.

On a country-road, the assurance that no cross-road exists on the stretch chosen for a racing gallop ought to be of paramount consideration, because a clumsy cart or children at play coming out of that cross-road at the precise moment, might be the cause of some most regrettable accident, which would undoubtedly be still more regrettable if instead of being a cart the vehicle were an auto truck, or some other mechanical contrivance.

But whether it be in a park or on a road, the gain which one is traveling must be steadied, and complete control of a horse—still more so of *the horses of a park*—must be obtained at cross-roads or at turnings, in order to be able to stop, or to otherwise avoid, with ease and promptness, any vehicles or animals crossing the road coming in contrary direction; this must especially be the case if the rider approaches to those crossings and turn-

are so contrived as to make it difficult for wayfarers, whether riding or afoot, to espy those coming toward them.

When such awkward turnings are approached, a rider ought to keep as close as possible to the gutter—or to the side walk—of the prescribed side of the road (which in England and in most parts of the British Empire as well as in Rome, Italy, is the left, and in France, in the major part of Italy, in Germany, and in fact almost everywhere else in the civilized world, is the right), and if several riders are together they ought to negotiate the turning two abreast (if not even in single file), allowing the *less speedy* of two horses to take the lead, in order that he might be easily caught up with by his escort) excepting if good reasons militate in favor of the faster horse of the two going ahead, as, for example, if the slower horse is a balker, or a shier, etc.

The reason for this advice is twofold. (1) However strongly it be recommended that riders, and drivers, keep to the prescribed side of the road, it happens unfortunately too often that, either on account of defect in guidance, or of lack of attention, riders and drivers are constantly found going on the wrong side of the road.

(2) With the craving for speed which, however adverse he may be to it in theory, every individual contracts when riding in an automobile, and owing to the desire most automobilists have of outrunning any car ahead, which is that craving's logical outcome, very few, if any chauffeurs, will resist the pleasure of shooting ahead of another car at a turning, which often presents a favorable circumstance that is too tempting for anyone but the most cautious to neglect seizing.

If then at that precise moment several riders traveling

together happen to be scattered all over that awkwardly turning road, a most serious accident will undoubtedly happen, with possibly grave injuries, or even death to some of them, by the fact of their meeting two automobiles trying to outrun each other at that very spot.

CHAPTER XXIV

SUNDRY ADVICE TO RIDERS

A means which helps one not to be overtired by riding is to do some occasional deep breathing during a ride. This relaxes the thoracic and abdominal muscles, and consequently makes riding much less fatiguing.

ON REIN-FREEDOM

During a ride, especially a long one, give, at times, full rein to your horse when at the walk, and let him then go with the head-position he pleases.

This ought not to be done at the start of a ride excepting by an excellent rider, and then only when riding an exceedingly well trained and thoroughly reliable horse, and again only when circumstances of road, etc., perfectly well known to both him and his mount warrant that the animal's equanimity will not be upset during the time the reins are thus practically abandoned.

This should consequently be practised only after the horse has travelled a little ("blown off steam," "taken off his edge," etc.), and it will then prove a source of rest for him, while he will nevertheless not be losing time, as he would if he were made to rest by a complete stop.

Besides the advantage of resting, the horse will acquire more confidence in his rider, as a result of the confidence that person will have apparently, placed in him.

Only the horses, fortunately few, that are mean by

nature, and those that have been rendered mean by protracted bad treatment, will not respond in a gentlemanly manner to confidence placed in them tactfully, *i.e.*, at the proper time, and in the proper way.

The proper way to do this is to lean slightly toward the animal's neck at the instant of giving him fuller rein; to caress him with one hand, while all the four reins (and the whip) are held in the other; and to speak to him kindly and coaxingly.

It usually occurs that even if previously tired, after a while of walking with perfectly loose reins, a horse will start trotting with more zest when his rider will want him to, thus showing not only that he has been refreshed, but also that he is appreciative of the kind treatment accorded him.

Horses that have become mean through protracted bad handling, will often return to their normal generosity and kindness if treated in the proper way, *i.e.*, with justice, firmness, and especially patience, joined to the abstention from unnecessary, or unnecessarily harsh, means of correction.

ON CONSERVATION OF HORSES

A good rider will apply himself to get the most service possible out of his horse without tiring him unnecessarily, and without making him "rank" (disgusted with his work).

In order not to tire a horse a rider must apply himself to start his rides, as a rule, always with a walk, and to make him trot only after his having settled down, regulating the first trot as perfectly as possible. He will then alternate it with another walk, then a little canter (on one of the leads), then walk, and so forth, as recommended in another part of this book,

In this manner not only will the horse work always "in" breath, but by changing gaits from time to time he will be more interested in his work than if he were to travel all the time at the same gait, even if that gait were the walk. And for several reasons, already cited in different parts of this book, the last portion of a ride ought always to be effected at the walk. Thus the two aims of not tiring the horse, and of not getting him disgusted will be attained.

It goes without saying that in countries, and during seasons, in which extreme cold reigns, a horse may be set to the trot from the start of a ride in order that coming from a warm stable he should not feel the difference of temperature too sharply, which he will then be protected from by immediate exercise; or at least the time he is made to walk before his initial trot ought to be very much shorter than would be allowed him in more temperate weather, or in a milder climate.

In the case of a party of persons riding together, the chief of the party, if he is acquainted with the horses composing the party, will place the weakest or least resisting among them in the first line, and regulate all his other horses' gaits and their order of march on those animals' ability to go, and on their capacity to work. Thus it will be that if his less resisting horses are not winded and tired out after a day's (or any other length of time's) work, his other horses will, with still greater reason, be fresh, fit and ready, at all times.

If this chief of party is unacquainted with the horses, he will at a glance, even before the start, have an idea of their individual working-power and endurance, by their conformation, strength of limb, bulk of barrel, strength of back, depth of shoulder, etc., provided, of course, he be an experienced horseman.

But as looks are apt to be deceiving, quite as much in horses as in human beings, he will offer a great proof of horsemanship if he keeps studying the difference in quality of the various horses composing the party under his command, if he be a teacher, or an officer, or under his leadership and care, if he be simply one of the friends composing that party.

He should therefore closely study, once "en route," each individual horse of the party, beginning especially with those who may seem to him the less resistant, and those who overwork themselves needlessly, and that consequently will be in a lather of sweat when other more resistant or less nervous horses in the party may have hardly "turned a hair."

This study—whether he be an experienced horseman or, still more so if he is a novice—will give him a knowledge which a book will rarely be able to convey, and which will be of great use to him at any time he may have to buy horses for his own or his family's use. Because it very often occurs that an animal which at first sight seems but a weedy picture-horse, will prove to be indefatigable, while another which, at first glance, will look powerful and resistant, will not have staying qualities, perhaps only on account of some little slackness in his coupling or through some other latent cause which a perfunctory glance, especially if the animal was then standing still, may not have revealed. Because it also occurs that a horse which when not mounted looks like a "dead cat," once with a rider on will prove exceedingly fiery and nervous, and tire himself out in half the time it may take all the other horses of the party to be just sobered-down, as it were, and consequently far from tired-out.

ON KICKERS

None but a pretty good horseman ought to own or even to ride a horse liable to kick, and therefore the means of curing a kicker will not be given here.

But as sometimes horses, and especially mares, will develop the habit of kicking at other horses in whose company they travel, it is advisable to say something here and now about the detection of the first symptoms of this defect which, if attended to in time, can usually be cured effectively and promptly, while if allowed to grow unchecked, frequently develop into a vice the consequences of which are exceedingly unpleasant.

So: if, while traveling in company, a horse suddenly puts the ears back and makes the slightest sign of thrusting the nose toward the other horse's neck or shoulders, he must be corrected *instantaneously*, because that is the first premonition of the kick that is to ensue, whether on that occasion or at some other time, maybe days, or even weeks, later.

If that preliminary manifestation remains unchecked, the next thing the horse will do will be to touch the other animal's neck (or more rarely his shoulder) with the lips, to the extent of even nipping him, if the bit's size or the position in which it momentarily is allows him to; and if he cannot nip him he at least will bare the teeth, in an unveiled threat to bite him if he could.

This time, or perhaps the next, the horse will accompany this threat by a vicious (wolflike) twisting switch of the tail, followed this time, or possibly the next, by a nervous elevation of the rump, perhaps with the simultaneous lifting of the hind leg nearest to the other horse.

Usually not this time, but oftener the next, that hind-leg, besides being lifted, is more or less thrust toward

the other horse; eventually it is kicked out in reality, and when the vice reaches its maximum the horse swiftly turns around and lashes out viciously with both hind legs, sometimes without the shadow of a reason, and without the slightest warning.

If combated in its preliminary stages, this vice is generally cured without much trouble, even by a rider who has not graduated above elementary horsemanship (corresponding to this book). But in case a horse has already contracted the habit of kicking at other horses—which mares acquire more easily than geldings or stallions—only an advanced rider can undertake its cure with a fairly good chance of success. Therefore the means of obtaining this result must be strictly left to him, and must not be attempted by a novice.

As horses, and especially mares, seem to derive keen pleasure from kicking at other horses, so that once they have done it successfully nobody can, as a rule, be sure they will not do it again, it is absolutely necessary that they be cured of this tendency at its very first manifestation. The means of obtaining this cure is the following:

The very first time a horse does that little trick of putting the ears back and thrusting the nozzle threateningly toward another horse, his rider must scold him, and simultaneously give him a sharp call with the reins of the side on which the threat takes place—paying at the same time attention that the “aids” urge the animal forward.

The sharp rein-call, besides being a sort of punishment, distracts the animal's attention—at least momentarily—from the desire to threaten the other horse, and joined to the scold, shows him that he has done wrong. When treated thus the very first time they make that pre-

tense at biting, many horses, if not most of them, lose the habit definitely, especially if the rider has brought this means of correction to bear with the proper emphasis (which does not mean hand-force, although sufficient leg-energy is advisable).

If this correction has not been effected under the most favorable conditions; or if the horse has already been in the habit of making those threats, a habit which sometimes does not take over once or twice to acquire, if it has not been checked by some previous rider, or riders ignorant of the meaning of those initial threats and of the means for their correction, the person who will first attempt to cure the animal will find the task one which will have to be carefully and patiently followed up, if satisfactory results are to be obtained. (And they *must* be obtained without any delay lest the horse acquire inveterately that very disagreeable vice, so dangerous to others, both horses and men.)

But in such cases the punishment must be applied with great tact and this is why:

It often occurs that by reason of the repeated "calls" given to the horse's mouth, the animal becoming fearful of the hand's action, falls a little "behind" the curb, thus diminishing his movement forward, at least at the fraction of the second of each "call's" occurrence. In order to avoid this, the "hand-calls" must not be effected each time the horse makes that suspicious ear-and-mouth threat, but must be replaced once in a while, either by a more violent action of the legs; or by a cut of the whip, as also by alternating the rein on which the "call" is made, *i.e.*, from curb to snaffle, or from side to side. When the whip is used, it ought to be applied preferably on the side opposite the accompanying horse, because otherwise the guilty one might seize the punishment by

the whip as an excuse for kicking-out, and would thus negative the rider's scope. But, whether the rider resorts to one means or another, he must not only maintain the punishment steadily at every infraction the horse may be guilty of, but he must increase its severity at each repetition, as it is only through the patient perseverance of his intent to destroy the progress of the vice that he will eventually cure the animal of it, for if he once fails to reprehend, it is probable that he will have to begin all over again, and thus put his patience to a still longer test.

As the curing of the vice of kicking when fully developed is not one which an elementary book such as this can presume to teach, suffice it nevertheless to be known that in what concerns his own safety the best a rider can do when a horse kicks is: (1) to sit as low down as possible in the saddle (*Fig. 92*), with the shoulders thrown back as much as possible at each kick, which duplex result will be accomplished by the maintenance of a very elastic, relaxed, waistline; (2) to use the legs as vigorously as possible backward, in order to obtain as much movement forward as possible from the horse; and simultaneously: (3) to elevate the horse's head as high as possible *compatible with the animal's movement forward*. In order not to destroy the movement forward so desirable especially in such cases, it will be advisable to elevate the head by means of the snaffle- instead of the curb-reins. The application of the whip is often excellent but as, when badly or insufficiently applied, it may have a negative effect rather than be beneficial, and as an ordinary rider will not be able to apply it with the vigor, the rapidity of repetition, and the discrimination, which render its use really efficient, in these circumstances especially, its ad-

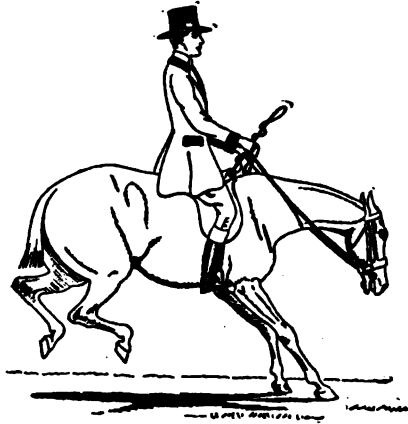


FIG. 92.

Rider in correct position, firmly seated on a kicking horse.

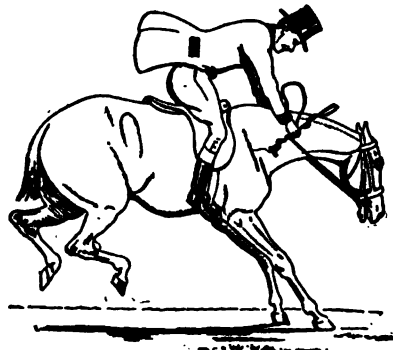


FIG. 93.

Rider unable to maintain a correct position on a kicking horse; unseated and about to fall off.

ministration will be explained with full detail in some other book.

A rider who is not advanced should consequently decline riding a kicker excepting for the purpose of study; and even then ought to ride him only under the direction of an experienced teacher because: if he does not know how to deal with such an animal, besides tending to make him still more vicious, he will run the risk of being more or less violently thrown (*Fig. 93*), and thus perhaps of being more or less seriously injured to absolutely no advantage for himself or the horse.

And as accidents occur with more frequency than is desirable, even when all sorts of precautions are taken, it is foolhardy to court them, especially when only disadvantages may be derived therefrom.

ON REARERS

Practically the same things can be said about rearers, which it ought to be considered criminal to give without warning to anyone, especially to ladies riding side-saddle. Suffice it to be said that if a horse who has not that vice accidentally rears, which in such cases is rarely very high, the thing to do is to throw one's shoulders forward, the two arms separated in such wise as to embrace, or try to embrace, the horse's neck, but without letting go of the reins. (*Fig. 94.*) (If the reins were abandoned the horse, on reaching the ground on the front feet, might get a notion of cavorting away, which might have decidedly unpleasant results for his already unbalanced rider.)

By this means the weight of the torso being displaced forward helps the horse to lower his forepart, and come down to the ground with the front feet in normal posi-

tion. If the torso were not thus displaced, either the rider would be thrown backward, and might then break his neck on reaching the ground; or, if he had not let go the reins in time, which by reason of the instinct of preservation are usually clutched at instinctively, he



FIG. 94.

Novice-rider acting correctly on a rearing horse (not an habitual rearer), bending forward and extending arms so as to embrace his mount's neck. Notice freedom of reins, legs in position to urge the animal forward without delay on his touching ground.



FIG. 95.

Novice-rider acting incorrectly on a rearing horse, i.e., with torso erect. Notice reins taut, that if slightly tighter would cause the horse to fall backward.

would cause the horse to lose his balance, and by pulling on the reins make him fall backward, directly on his (the rider's) chest, thus running the risk of being crushed—perhaps to death. (I have seen two horses rear and fall back, full length, on their riders and roll on them in their struggle to get up, without worse conse-

quence than a bad shaking-up for the men. It must nevertheless be said that these accidents occurred on the tanbark.)

When throwing the torso forward, the rider must have the waist so flexible that, on the rearing horse's front feet reaching the ground, he will automatically have it again replaced in the correct position, *i.e.*, erect.

Simultaneously his thighs (and knees) must not lose contact with the saddle, and his lower legs must be balanced in such a way as to be able to be used as vigorously as necessary on the horse's flanks, in order to urge him forward as soon as his front feet will have touched the ground. If he were not to move forward immediately on touching the ground with the front feet, the horse might rear a second time, and get rid of the rider more easily then, on account of the man having been thrown out of equilibrium already by the first rear.

ON SHIERS

One of the most unwelcome feelings a person can experience is that of riding an inveterate shier, of which there are many grades, only one of which is going to be mentioned here.

This is the horse that shies slightly for every little thing he encounters, such as a piece of paper, a white stone, a ray of sunshine passing through trees, or a piece of cloth hanging on a bush, etc.

These "shiers" are disagreeable on account of the continuity of their side-thrusts, but they are not dangerous to ride, excepting at a fast gait, as the side-jumps they make for every little thing are not followed by any other defence, and it requires but a minimum of urging to make them pass the various objects of their fears.

Such animals usually suffer from defective eyesight,

are consequently incurable, and so the best a rider can do with them is not to add to their fright by beating, but simply keep them going—at whatever gait he may have adopted at the time—as if nothing were wrong.

They must then be ridden strictly with the reins separated in the two hands—(*Fig. 24 and most pictures of persons on horseback.*) (English position)—with the rider's legs (also his whip and spurs, if any) always ready to urge them forward, and with the torso always extremely flexible in order that he be not unseated by the suddenness or the continuity of their side-thrusts.

But while the urging forward must be effected without the slightest delay, and must be given with the necessary decisiveness, or even vigor, as the case may be, the rider should avoid using the more coercive means—whip and spurs—with anything like anger, as the result of his ill-temper rendering his mount fearsome or irritable would only make matters worse.

If a horse has been illtreated by some previous rider on account of this continuous shying, the person subsequently riding him must apply himself to destroy the bad impressions made on the animal by harsh treatment, while urging him forward unfailingly at each of his side-thrusts.

He will fulfill this apparently antagonistic double-purpose by speaking to his mount either coaxingly or reprovably, in any case not harshly, notwithstanding that he may be simultaneously urging him forward, even perhaps vigorously, by leg, whip, or spur.

When doing this the rider must carefully avoid the monosyllable "Ho!" and use any other wording, including "baby-talk" (which seems to please most horses more than anything else, some of them preferring it even to sugar), because "Ho" giving the average horse the im-

pression of stopping, it must be used for this purpose exclusively, in prevision of the event that if all other means of stopping his mount were some day accidentally to fail a rider, he should have this one to turn to as a last resort.

As only the necessary amount or quality of "aids" must be applied, and applied only at the necessary time—a fraction of a second, possibly—if the horse merely thrusts sideways, and returning spontaneously to his line of march, continues to go forward of his own free will, no urging will be necessary. The rider will then only have to keep his various "aids" in readiness, in order that not a fraction of a second's delay occur in their application, if required at some other instant.

When "aids" are not needed it may be better not to speak to the horse either, as the voice is useful under those circumstances merely to make it clear to the animal that the application of the "aids," especially if vigorous, is not meant as a punishment. (Defective eyesight not being a vice it would be unjust to punish a horse for it.)

Other horses are afraid of nothing outside of some particular object: say a stalled automobile, or a man on top of a ladder, etc., and they will go sideways on meeting such objects, or may even hesitate to pass them by.

If they do not act more disagreeably than that, the only thing to do is to ignore their fear, and make them go past the cause of their hesitation by means of "aids" applied with just the sufficient decisiveness necessary to maintain their movement forward, and consequently used without undue severity.

While on approaching these causes of the animal's fear, the reins must be promptly separated in the two hands—second (English) position—the hands must be kept as low as may be necessary; and while the "aids" are

being made ready for application, the rider must be careful not to stiffen up on seeing those objects (that cause the horse to shy) nor must he give the slightest intimation of preparing for any emergency, as by so doing he would impress his mount with the feeling that there is something in reality frightful since he also is afraid, which would, of course, increase the horse's nervousness and cause him to hesitate still more to approach or go past them. Above all things the rider, when at a slow gait, must not allow the horse to turn and rush away from those objects, as this would eventually lead him to refuse absolutely going by them; and as such a refusal constitutes the first step toward the contracting of a very serious vice, which, when allowed the slightest development, becomes a more difficult task to cure than the average rider can expect to undertake with much, if any, hope of success, it must be nipped in the bud at its first manifestation.

There are other sorts of defences dangerous shiers are guilty of which, being far above the average rider's power of action, can be cured only by an expert rider and trainer.

But even the quietest and most level-headed horses will jump a little to one side, or be startled, if something unexpected suddenly takes place beside, or in front of them, as for example a chicken, a rabbit, or anything else coming suddenly out of a bush, or a dog rushing at them from behind a wall, etc.

But such trifles do not constitute a horse a shier; and he will not become one on that account nor for any other similarly futile reason *unless* each time these things occur his rider clutches at the reins, stiffens-up, and otherwise gives proof of being himself afraid.

Then the animal's nervousness growing at each repeti-

tion of these little occurrences, he will presently be startled by any and every thing, without the rider's understanding how it is that a horse previously afraid of practically nothing, should be startled at every and any thing, and be constantly "looking for trouble"!

Horses thus spoilt can only be set right again by being handled during some time (days or weeks according to circumstances), by an experienced rider whose calm and resolution while on horseback will cause the animal to regain confidence, in some cases even to the extent of becoming positively courageous.

As nevertheless a real shier may some time or other be a source of danger to any but an excellent rider—and may be unpleasant even for him—the best thing to do, as a rule, is to get rid of such a horse as soon as possible, if one happens to have become his owner, or not ride him if he belongs to a third party.

ON STUMBLERS

Another of the most disagreeable sensations in riding is to bestride a stumbler, which, according to road, gait, and other conditions, may be accompanied or followed by still more disagreeable consequences.

Of course "the best horse can stumble," as a popular saying has it, and such a thing does occur either through fatigue, bad riding, or the accidental placing of one of the animal's feet in an unseen hole in the ground, for all of which he can hardly be catalogued a stumbler. Many horses stumble through carelessness, and such will consequently stumble freely on an absolutely level road, built on perfectly good ground, but will not take one false step where the ground is uneven, and the road full of big

stones and boulders. This occurs because the security of their footing in the first instance renders them careless as to how they tread, and their insecurity in the second instance causes them to pick up their feet properly and make sure how, and where, they place them.

This sort of stumbler is not dangerous, and can, as a rule, be pretty easily cured, by the rider giving him a sharp "reminder" with the legs, with the whip, or even with the spurs, at each mistake he commits, so that the horse, assimilating "stumbling" with "punishment," stops doing the first in order to avoid the second.

It is useless to say that a high-mettled horse, or one of quality, even if with less mettle, will—barring accidents—not commit such mistakes, which only the careless horse (the slovenly one, as it were) will be guilty of. Many such slovenly horses will stumble at the walk, who will not stumble at any other gait, not even when jumping. (Some of them are in fact quite reliable jumpers.)

Outside of the careless horses the habitual stumblers are those whose front legs are weak and therefore not of good staying-power, especially when they have to support a rider's weight superadded to theirs. They thus cannot lift the feet as they should, that is, with spring, snap, energy, and grace: nor can they bring them back to the ground with the light, airy firmness which alone allows those horses whose limbs are thus endowed to lift them off the ground again snappily as soon as they have touched it, and therefore give their riders not only most agreeable, but also perfectly secure rides.

Such horses are generally either knee-sprung (*Fig. 96*), or foundered, or both, and are consequently not fit for saddle use, even if they are young (say from four to six) or perhaps not more than of "good age" (say up to twelve years); they should be therefore condemned as

saddle horses and sold, or put to light harness work. Age alone has nothing to do with stumbling, as horses have reached very advanced ages, without stumbling. I have known a horse thirty-five years old and a mare forty-four, that were neither of them stumblers.

Especially among thoroughbreds, more or less knee-



FIG. 96.

Leg of a knee-sprung horse. Notice legs out of plumb (marked by the dotted line); also how the tendon is hollowed at the knee (behind), the near limb (left) being more affected than the off (right). (This inequality is most usual.)

sprung horses are found who have never stumbled, and do not begin to stumble, if at all, until comparatively late in life; there are, in fact, numerous examples of very knee-sprung horses "close to the blood" that have given long and satisfactory service to riding academies without ever stumbling—much less falling—although being

used oftener than not by ignorant, careless, or even brutal, persons, who would ride them half to death in view of getting their money's worth out of the poor animals.

While, on principle, one must *not* ride with "abandoned" reins but on the contrary, besides having the horse under control, one must guard against the possibility of stumbling, especially if the road be uneven, it is strange to say that when riding on a really bad road, in which big stones, boulders, ditches, fallen trees, etc., may be encountered, a looser, or even a very much looser, rein should be given the horse, so that although under the rider's continuous watch, he be free to lower the head the better to pick his own way, and thus be left to rely on his own judgment and instinct in the choice of where to place his feet.

There are also a few horses whose legs are strong and nevertheless who, while never having stumbled, stumble once, usually pretty badly, with one foot; from that day forward they will stumble every once in a while, perhaps even quite often, in a manner which does not denote carelessness, and one is puzzled what to think about it as they do not show any sign of leg-weakness or of their limbs having been injured.

This is what then generally has taken place.

While going along on an apparently excellent road, a perfectly good horse steps on a rolling stone, or into a hole, and stumbles badly. The twisting of his pastern (ankle), while not causing any injury, either exteriorly visible, or recognizable by the hand, or painful to the touch, has none the less weakened some of the tendons, or ligaments, of that pastern, or made them so sensitive that the least awkward step the animal may take, or the placing of his foot on a slightly uneven strip of ground,

which would not have made him wince before, causes him, if not perhaps actual pain, at least the momentary failing of the limb, with its consequent stumble.

These horses apart from being disagreeable to ride on account of the mental tension, the continuous suspense in which one is while on their backs, may prove even more dangerous than a habitual stumbler, because when such horses stumble they stumble very low: practically to a fall. If this occurs when going faster than at a walk, it may cause the unexpected rider to be unseated or even to be thrown headlong, with a violence proportionate to the animal's stature, to the vigor of his action, and to the speed at which he was moving at that precise moment.

ON BUCKERS

Besides the kicker and the rearer there are two other sorts of vicious horses which it is unsafe for anyone apart from an expert to ride, to-wit: the bucking horse, and the runaway.

Most horses, especially in the western part of the United States, and it is said in Australia too, as well as among those of the Roman "campagna," and those bred in that corner of southern France called Camargue will, when fresh, elevate their backs catwise on being ridden, and indulge in a few jumps, with heads lower than desirable.

But, while they may indulge in this little fun without the slightest intention of dismounting their riders, most of them may obtain this unwelcome result, unless (1) these parties are sufficiently advanced in Equitation to be capable of destroying the force of the first, or let us say the second, of such jumps; (2) or if they are sufficiently prompt in recognizing the impending occurrence,

as well as in applying the necessary means to prevent the jumps from actually taking place.

So, while such horses may, at a pinch, be ridden by any but the very inexperienced, it is advisable that they be exercised somewhat before; on the other hand a real bucking horse cannot be ridden by any but a very excellent rider, or at any rate by a good "sticker-on," who even then does not always ride him with ease, nor perhaps with more than a minimum of assurance against falling off.

As soon as a rider feels his horse putting up the back and moving the legs queerly, generally out of time with the beat of the gait in which he happens to be, he may be pretty nearly sure that the animal intends to buckjump. Supposing then that he be riding a well-trained horse—which is the only sort any reader of this book should sit on—the only thing he will have to do when he feels the sensation described in the preceding paragraph, will be: to lift his mount's neck and obtain a very complete flexion with the animal's head as high as possible; to keep the head and neck at that height, although with loose reins (in response to the flexion of course) while simultaneously maintaining the movement forward by a very tactful use of the legs.¹

As in order to buck, however lightly, a horse has to convex the back and lower the head, it is comprehensible that the fact of his not being able to lower the head will prevent him from lifting the back, and thus it will be wellnigh impossible for him to buckjump.²

¹ The best trained and best mannered horse allowed to stand too many days in his stall without sufficient work, may, or even will, on his first outing, manifest the boisterousness of his feelings by cutting-up, and buckjumping. It is consequently advisable, as much for this reason as in view of his general health, that every horse be regularly exercised.

² Nevertheless a few, extraordinarily strong-backed horses can buck, not very high, but at times repeatedly, although their head be high.

He may, if very intent on jumping, make some little jump notwithstanding that his head be up, but, not being able to buck, his rider will have a minor chance of being unseated, and a still less chance of falling off. But, while the animal's head must therefore absolutely be kept high, it is not less imperatively necessary that his movement forward be maintained, if not even increased, in order that he do not exchange the threat of bucking into rearing which would possibly make matters worse.

In view of this, the rider should, under the circumstances, use the "aids" (lower legs) with such tact, perspicacity, and precision, as to continuously maintain the movement forward, yet without unduly exciting the horse; and he should use the hands with such delicacy and tact as to allow the fullness of that movement forward, while nevertheless maintaining the horse's head at a height sufficient to prevent him from convexing (lifting) the back. But, while lifting the hands in order to elevate the horse's neck and head, the rider must pay particular attention not to allow his elbows to lift away, and aside, from his hips, as this mistake would, of course, lead to all the ill-consequences such as incorrect arm-position entails, as explained in the part of this book dedicated to "The Reasons Why" of the correct position of the rider (*Fig. 19*). And these ill-consequences would be of greater import to the rider with a horse bucking more or less violently under him.

As soon as the rider will feel the horse's back lowering to normal; his gait getting regularized; and his attitude becoming altogether calmer and more sedate, whether as a result of his own actions to that effect, or through the animal's own volition, the best thing will be for him to start his mount trotting, in order that he blow off steam and have some needed exercise.

While it is preferable for some horses to be walked during quite a while before being allowed to trot, because of the increase in their movement forward at this gait translating itself then into bucking, it is better for other horses to be trotted very much sooner, as their being compelled to walk quite a while when fresh is apt to make them peevish.

The rider then is the sole judge of what it may be best for him to do, whether his opinion be based on previous acquaintance with that particular animal, or whether it be the result of his feeling what is going on under him.

Some riders combat this sort of buckjumping, or the threat of buckjumping, by galloping the horse rather hard, some of them with head kept high, others with head loose. While this means often gives results, it is available only to persons well accustomed to ride, and is at that, only a make shift, not a curative, as it very often encourages the horse to cut-up, or to threaten buckjumping, probably so as to enjoy the fun of a little wild gallop.

If the rider has decided on this policy he should, while making his mount gallop in that manner, keep his head as high up as possible, in order that this head position render the gallop difficult and disagreeable; he should also use the "aids" with such severity, while galloping, as to make the horse realize that the performance is not staged for his enjoyment, but is a punishment inflicted on him as a warning not to make such buckjumps again or possibly even merely threaten to buckjump. It is not necessary that the gallop be fast for the punishment to be effective.

With some low-bred, cold-blooded horses, the application of the whip, used even during the gallop, and slashed saberwise right and left along the flanks (*Fig. 70*), be-

hind the rider's thighs is a quite effective means of punishment, generally remembered by them after having been used with tact, justice, and severity.

ON RUNAWAYS

Real runaways are fortunately very rare; and it is probable that even the average professional horseman has not met with over one such horse in about every quarter of a century; so that, what most amateurs devoutly believe to be runaways, and even some novice-trainers describe as runaways, have simply been animals that have momentarily gone out of their control for some simple reason, and have perhaps thrown them. This may have been even involuntary, because in some similar cases horses have been known to stop as soon as their riders fell, and a few have even come back, as if to see whether the man were hurt, and have then allowed themselves to be remounted by him.

The real runaway then is the one who not only gets out of his rider's control, but loses also control over himself, owing to intense pain, indomitable fright, or mental alienation due to yet other causes than these two.

Thus the real runaway not only goes at top speed, but runs indefinitely, being stopped only either by some unsurmountable obstacle, or by dropping to the ground in sheer exhaustion.

In his wild flight the real runaway does not pick his path, but runs amuck of anything and everything, going straight into a stone wall or over a parapet; into a body of water, or down a precipice; nothing stops him and nothing his rider can do will avail. To say that such horses are dangerous is to underqualify them, and it is fortunate that they are so exceedingly rare.

Most real runaways are caused by pain, and when this is the case the seat of the pain is in the mouth two thirds of the time, and in the flanks the other third. When in the mouth the pain may be the result of a wolf tooth entering into the flesh as a consequence of the movements of the mouth due to the pressure of the irons, in which case extraction is the only sure cure; or it may be caused by the rider's unusually heavy and cruel hand; or by extremely severe biting which, instead of helping control certain horses, simply infuriates them, especially if they are finely bred and high-strung.

The only cure for this sort of runaway is that the rider *learn*. "Real" runaways have been provoked by riders unknowingly digging spurs into the sides just at the moment when, as they were getting excited, the use of spurs was inadvisable, they always are, excepting when a "finished" horse is ridden by an expert able to use the spurs in the manner necessary to calm him.

There also is the still rarer case of a horse being, or suddenly becoming mentally deranged, in other words insane, which is one for Veterinarian care, not for Equestrian attention.

The "real" runaway provoked by the inadvertent use of spurs, is the extreme development of many of the "false" or "make-believe" runaways which occur in this city, and in many other places; and this is how that development is brought about.

A rider who has not yet acquired full control of the legs goes outdoors by himself . . . the summit of his ambition . . . and, of course, he wears spurs! Unaccustomed to being left to his own devices, or riding perhaps that particular horse for the first time he forgets, at the first little untoward movement his mount makes, what is best for him to do; and the instinct of preserva-

tion taking hold of him, he does precisely what he should not, to-wit: stiffens up, irritates the animal's mouth by hanging on the reins feverishly, or else abandons them completely. In any case he envelops the horse's body with his lower legs, sticks the heels into the animal's flanks, and therefore makes him run faster . . . especially if he be wearing those blessed spurs!

While then the quiet, tactful approach of the lower legs to the flanks, joined to the necessary corresponding action of the hands on the mouth, are an effective means for calming a horse (when they are used on an animal that has been trained to respond properly to the "aids"), their nervous, uncontrolled, untactful use, out of harmony with the use of hands (themselves untactful, uncontrolled and nervous), will have an absolutely negative effect, even on a well-trained horse responsive to the correct use of the higher and lower "aids" (hands and legs) and they consequently will provoke a still worse effect on a horse untrained to submit to them.

Another frequent cause of "false" runaways, which takes place mostly in renting stables where the equipping of a horse is often done carelessly, is that animals are allowed to go out without chains on their curbs which riders eager to join friends usually forget to observe before getting in the saddle, or are perhaps unaware of having to look out for.

Very often also, horses—especially those of renting stables—have been accustomed to start galloping at a given point, say from the foot of a hill, or at the beginning of a level piece of ground; or they will have taken the habit of rushing home from a certain point, on the home-stretch, as many livery-stable riders—Sunday ones especially—believe they exhibit proof of good horsemanship by returning home at a gallop, when in reality

they show their ignorance and lack of ordinary common-sense by acting thus.

In these various cases, when ridden by someone else unaware of his little pet habits, the horse becomes restive at not being allowed to have his way, turns about a little, and makes one or two little jumps to emphasize his desire to go; the rider then, instead of calming him, or even of just letting him go, will act wrongly with the hands, do the heel-embracing stunt, and thus will clinch things and the horse starting galloping, the rider will have that which, in his excitement, he will firmly believe is a runaway.

In this connection, unexperienced riders must be warned that as horses are animals of habit, and are endowed with an exceptionally good memory for places, they should never be allowed to do the same thing at the same place, nor under the same conditions, especially when that particular thing may some day be a cause of grievance to one's self or to a third party.

Whenever we ride a horse, even if he be our personal property, we should always bear in mind that he will some day belong to, or be ridden by, somebody else who, not being possibly as good a rider as ourselves, may have a disagreeable experience with the animal, if we have allowed him to acquire some habit which, although agreeable to our selfish caprice, may prove unwelcome, or even dangerous, to others, less good riders than ourselves, or unadvised of that particular little trick.

Be it sufficient for the reader of this elementary book to know, if he unfortunately comes across a mount which takes a fancy to go faster than desired, that about the only thing he can do is to keep a cool head; maintain the torso as flexible as possible; sit as low as possible in the

saddle, with heels as low as possible, too; and do his level best to gain control of his mount's lower jaw, either by flexions, if the horse is running with head high, or, if the horse be running with head low (boring) by elevation of the hands, fixed, yet ready to yield to lightness.

The use of the voice is also beneficial.

If the horse picks his way, goes slower when turning, avoids obstacles, if in other words he attends to self-protection, the rider may rest assured he is not running away, in the real sense of the term, but is simply having a little fun.

Cases of this sort have been cured by forcing the horse to gallop on when he had become tired; by keeping urging him on when it had become manifest that he did not relish the idea of galloping any longer; and by punishing him continuously with the whip, even a little after he had returned to the walk.

A strong horse may cheerfully gallop at full speed three or four miles; but if he is made to keep the same gait up four or five miles more, and is then made to continue galloping, even at a reduced gait, but to the accompaniment of whip lashes, for another three or four miles, he will be sorry long before having covered those distances, that he ever started the joke.

There are three other requisites for this punishment, to-wit:

- (1) Space;
- (2) Sufficient coolheadedness, energy and stamina on the rider's part; and
- (3) Enough commonsense, horsesense, or experience for him to know when to stop, as overdoing the thing might ruin a good horse for life, or might even cause his death, which might be a misfortune because, although

good horses are not necessarily runaways, runaways of this kind are generally good horses.

ON HORSES' BRUISES

Certain bruises that occur to horses by the very fact of usage are easily and promptly curable if attended to in time, but if neglected can develop into very ugly, disagreeable, and painful sores.

The three most common sorts are, in the following order, those on the back—saddle bruises; those under the chin—curb-chain bruises; and the girth bruises.

Saddle-bruises occur as often by incorrect riding as by damaged saddle-padding and incorrect saddling.

Outside of the removal of those three bruise causes, the use of sheepskin—the hair in contact with the horse's skin—always proves most beneficial. It is excellent for horses the skin of whose backs is tender, either by nature, or by the number of old bruises it carries.

When, mostly through neglect, a bruise has developed into a sore, a thick saddle-cloth in which a hole will have been cut to correspond with the sore-spot and prevent contact with the saddle, will prove very beneficial.

It will be still more beneficial if together with this protective contraption an ointment, a lotion maintained by means of a cloth wet with it, or a powder, is used, according to the prescription of a competent Veterinarian.

Saddle-sores should be properly and timely attended to, as their neglect can cause abscesses which, degenerating possibly into deep tumors, have to be operated on, and render the animal unfit for saddle-service, temporarily or even for life.

Curb chain bruises are caused by hard hands, by im-

proper placing of the chain (not flat, but rolled up or twisted) and also by the displacement of the hook, which, when pulled toward the horse's mouth, bruises the corner of his lips, or pinches it by entanglement with the dangling links of the chain.

But, apart from those causes, most young horses, especially those whose skin is fine and tender, will bruise under the chin by the mere fact of the chain's friction.

An old handkerchief rolled around the chain and secured by a safety pin placed on the outer side of the chain (facing the animal's neck) will prove very useful.

A small pad of sheepskin made up by a clever saddlemaker with tiny straps and buckles so as to permit of its being removed is far better than a leather curb-chain, because the leather hardens, and, becoming eventually as incisive as a knife-blade, cuts the horse more painfully than a metal chain.

Girth sores are usually the result of dirty, ill-kempt, girths—especially cloth—or of dirty, ill-kempt horses. It sometimes occurs also on account of the saddle having been placed too far forward, and the girth being then so close to the horse's elbows as to compel friction in awkward places. Apart from the observance of cleanliness and the correct placing of the saddles, the use of leather-girths is very commendable, as well as the enveloping of the girth with sheepskin at the point of contact with the bruise.

As these bruises occur most of the time at the front part of the girths—toward the horse's forelegs—the saddling of the horse a little farther back than usual (or than advisable) will be useful until the bruise has completely disappeared and hair grown over it.

If taken in time, absence from all work, and the application of lotions, or ointments, as prescribed by a com-

petent Veterinarian, will obtain the cure of a bruise under forty-eight hours.

ON HUMAN BRUISES

It often occurs that riders' seats get bruised by friction with the saddle, or by the crumpling of clothes—underwear or breeches.

This occurs for obvious reasons, especially to novice-riders, and should be treated without delay, as follows; and before the bruise has become a sore:

Wash carefully with some antiseptic—say peroxide of hydrogen—dry *by mopping* with sterilized lint; put a thick layer of oxide of zinc ointment on the sore spot; and cover it with strips of adhesive plaster, criss-crossed four times; twice at right angles, and twice on opposite biases.

Each successive layer of these adhesive-plaster strips should be longer than the previous one, in order that each individual strip sticks on to the skin. If this is not observed, the whole contrivance is apt to fall off sooner, or at least before the bruise is cured.

Do not tear off the dressing, but leave it on the wound until it falls off; when this occurs clean the spot with benzine-soaked cotton.

It is advisable to continue riding while carrying the dressing.

ON NOT BUYING A HORSE

Unless there be good reasons to the contrary, it is advisable not to buy a saddle-horse before having learned to ride pretty well on horseback, and before having acquired the knowledge of horseflesh that intelligent and conscientious teachers impart.

The advantage in doing so lies in that one acquires experience by riding various horses—the opportunities for which are offered by riding academies—by familiarizing one's self with the peculiarities, and overcoming the difficulties that each one of them presents, besides being able at a later date to buy a more spirited, more interesting, and possibly far better animal than one would have thought of acquiring earlier, in consequence of that cultivated experience and increased familiarization.

One of the disadvantages of buying a horse too soon, and riding only him is that: becoming accustomed to that single mount, it is hard to relish riding a new one, when in course of time the change has to be effected.

It is all the harder, possibly as learning all over again, especially for those who, not harboring any special love for horses and horsemanship, have taken up riding on medical advice, or to follow the fashionable fad, and who, not having found a teacher able to develop in them an intellectual interest in Equitation, ride on horseback with as much feeling as they would have in taking a daily dose of medicine.

• ON CERTAIN APPAREL

It is advisable not to ride without gloves. Reins are often hurtful to hands—especially ladies'—and their handling, being then hesitating, gives them a sense of indefiniteness which reacts adversely on the horse, who, therefore, responds inappropriately to the rider's appeals.

Gloves, without being too large—and, therefore, clumsy—ought to be large enough for the hand and fingers to close and open easily, and quickly, over the reins.

Gloves of washable, soft material are the best, give the longest service, and can be kept clean.

Children ought never to be allowed to ride without wearing breeches, leggings or puttees, as any bruise they might receive on the bare spots of the limbs might be followed very quickly by blood-poisoning.

Grown-ups ought to ride in long underdrawers so that the skin be not in direct contact with the breeches, as a bruise might cause blood-poisoning because of the germs which outer-garments, however clean, are apt to contain, even when new.

(One such case resulted fatally in a very short lapse of time, to the Author's personal knowledge . . . not hearsay.)

ON WHERE TO USE THE WHIP

Excepting in a few cases that do not come within the scope of this book, the riding-whip must be used behind the rider's thigh, rather than in front of his knee, and must therefore operate, when necessary, along the horse's flank—even, if advisable, on his quarters—consequently *not* on his shoulders.

The reason for this preference arises from the following considerations.

The effect produced on the horse by the "cut"—the punishing action as differentiated from other actions of the riding-whip—is that of making him "shrink" from it in avoidance or self-protection. When this shrinking occurs in the animal's hindquarters it naturally results in his going forward. When it occurs in his forepart—as it does when the cut is administered on the shoulder—the shrinking that it causes entails a greater or lesser curtailment of the movement forward, according to different circumstances, principal among which are, of

course, the severity of the cut, and the animal's sensitiveness.

The rider having to aim at developing the movement forward, or at least at always maintaining it, and therefore never curtailing it, it is logical that—excepting in certain cases, as already stated—he should punish the horse with the whip by using it on the parts of the animal's body whence he will obtain the duplex result (punishment and movement-forward), which parts, as we have just seen, lay behind his thigh, and not ahead of his knee.

The argument offered against the using of the whip back of the rider's thigh is that it makes the horse kick. Although it does so at times, even when the whip is properly handled it also provokes the so-advisable movement forward together with the kick; while when it causes the kick—as it eventually does—in response to its application on the shoulder, it gives this kick a more disagreeable feeling because of the backward shrinking it causes to the horse, and from him to the rider.

Besides which, when the horse kicks in response to a hindquarter whip-cut, he kicks out, squarely, in a way that is not disagreeable to the average rider, the quality of whose seat it improves if he knows how to lean back, to keep his torso flexible, and his heels low (*Fig. 92*), as advised elsewhere in this book; but when the horse kicks in response to the shoulder whip-cut, he usually cow-kicks—or very soon learns to kick thus—and then his hoof can inflict a very painful hurt to the rider's heel on reaching it.

When a rider punishes with the whip, he must give his mount absolute mouth-freedom, so that he be able to develop the movement forward in response to the whip-

cut, as much of the kicking and other defences that follow whip-punishment are attributable to hindrance of the movement forward through too strong and too fixed a hand-hold.

ON SPURS

Nothing is said here relatively to the use of spurs because this book being elementary is intended for novice-riders, who should never use spurs; they should therefore avoid riding animals that require spurs for activation, but should especially avoid riding those that require spurs for control.

In the author's experience of half a century—eighteen years of which as a professional—he has reached the conclusion that spurs are far from being always a necessity, even for training, as the most beautiful actions can be obtained, in the majority of cases, without their use, even in High School airs, such as the Piaffer, Passage, Spanish-walk, Change-of-feet, and Side-stepping-cantering, and Double-extension-trot, which are, after all, the only airs offering practical advantages for other than circus purposes.

ON HEAD-SHAKES

Horses will sometimes shake their heads in ways that puzzle a novice-rider, and that uninformed riders, even past the novitiate, cannot cure.

These head-shakes are of two distinct sorts.

One sort—and unfortunately the most frequent—is a straight, up-and-down motion, sometimes smooth, sometimes jerky.

It is very correctly termed “incensing” by the French, as it resembles the movements given the incensories by

choir-boys in honour of the exposed Blessed Sacrament, or at other moments of Divine Services—Mass, or Benediction, Solemn Funerals, etc.

The horse performs these movements for various reasons, the commonest of which, unfortunately, is harshness of hand, whether of the rider then using him, or of previous riders; ill-adjusted bridles, the leathers of which bruise the animal's head—oftener than not around the ears—or tight-fitting mouth-irons are other causes; it sometimes is caused by fatigue; sometimes by bad condition of the teeth and gums.

Whatever its cause, this incensing should be attended to at its first appearance, as it soon becomes a habit, and sometimes degenerates into a nervous tic—or mania—which, like all such manifestations, are difficult to be cured (even humans being often incapable of overcoming manias) and the first thing to be done in this respect is to make sure of the conditions of the equipment.

These head-shakes ought to be promptly attended to because, apart from being a source of displeasure, they are apt to cause more or less harm to the rider who, if squarely hit by his mount's head, can have a bumped forehead, a poached eye, a broken nose, or an injured mouth or jaw.

Before it degenerates into the almost incurable nervous tic, it can be overcome, more or less soon, by the simple means of hitting a rein—preferably the right curb—sharply, with one finger (preferably the right medius) at the moment this head-shake occurs.

In order to be promptly efficacious this means should be applied not later than the middle of the motion, *i.e.*, just when the horse's nozzle is half-way up; sooner if possible; later if the rider is not quick enough; but *never* after the motion is ended as, on account of its home-

opathic action, it would then cause another jerk, and its meaning would therefore perplex the horse.¹

The rider's arms should, at that instant, be superlatively flexible; the "hit," however distinctly effected, should not be so strong as to influence any other part of the horse *but* his jaw; and it should be as sharp as a "pizzicato" on a stringed musical instrument.

At those junctures the rider should have the lower "aids" tactfully ready near the horse's flanks, in order to prevent the manifestation of the slightest movement backward that the finger-hit might entail, or even so as to slightly increase the movement forward during the application of the remedy.

When, as often occurs with horses that have been driven much on tight-fitted check-reins (or, still worse, on the over-drawn check-rein) the incensing has degenerated into a nervous tic—which the rider will realize if two or three successive finger-hits have not produced a remarkable improvement, and half-a-dozen, at most, have not effected a cure (at least momentary)—he should, if a novice, pray for patience to be granted him until the end of that ride, leaving that cure to a more advanced rider.

A jerk head-shake is nearly always indicative of pain; and when it is accompanied by a sort of double-shuffle at the moment the nozzle is half-way up—or even higher—it is indicative of intense pain, possibly from a tooth, or a fractured jaw. In such cases, and especially in this extreme one, the rider should not think of punishing, as it might provoke balking, rearing, or running-away, possibly all three consecutively, in the order named. He

¹ A "hit" on a rein—especially on a curb-rein—causes the horse to jerk his head; as it also cures the head-jerk it can be said to act homeopathically.

should, therefore, apply himself not to touch the horse's mouth, excepting very lightly, by means of the snaffle-reins just to guide him, and should simultaneously use the voice so as to calm his mount, or to distract his attention, as much as possible, from his suffering.

If the double-shuffle headshake were accompanied by a little jump, and he happened not to be too far from home, or from a place where he could safely put up the poor beast, he should dismount and lead him, because there might be the danger of the animal's losing control of himself and becoming temporarily insane, during which catastrophic occurrence neither ability, courage, nor intelligence would be of any avail to the rider . . . only the Hand of God.

ON FLIES

There is another sort of head-shake when the horse moves the head sideways, in which case he especially shakes its top.

It is usually a proof of something tickling him around the ears, generally hairs from his mane or his fore-lock.

If these are trimmed, or if, although extant, they are not responsible for it, then this headshake is generally caused by a fly or a mosquito getting into one of the animal's ears. This makes some horses so nervous that it actually maddens a few of them, fortunately very few; but, nevertheless, horses have been known to run away in consequence of just that.

The rider should immediately remedy matters by straightening out the hair, or chasing the fly, but apart from the fact that these pests are sometimes very obstinate and insist on returning to a given spot of any animal's body—whether man or beast—it is sometimes nearly impossible to get rid of them, according to cir-

cumstances, for example near a swamp or other fly-breeding spots, especially in hot weather, or in warm climates.

The best thing to be done in such cases is to make the horse trot in order to render it more difficult for the pests to bother him, or at least to invade his ears.

When flies or mosquitoes are out of the question the rider must think of the possibility of some ear-trouble, and call in a veterinarian.

In similar circumstances, when the flies do not threaten the animal's ears but keep attacking other parts of his body—usually then the abdomen, the hind-quarters, the shoulders and the neck (their preferences for which are in the above order)—and when trotting cannot be kept-up indefinitely either because of the warmth of the temperature, the length of the journey, or the conditioning of man and beast, the flies ought to be chased away, as effectively as may be possible, by passing the riding-whip swiftly, *but caressingly*, at the different parts of the horse's body visited by the pests, in order that they do not worry the poor beast too much and cause him to kick (often to cowkick then). If the approach of the whip makes the horse a little nervous, one must continue its use, accompanying or preceding it by coaxing, soothing, voice-appeals.

This will be one of the occasions on which a long—3 feet 9 inches, or 4 feet—riding-whip will prove most serviceable.

In fly-infested, warm countries, tassels made of cotton-thread allowed to dangle from different parts of the horse's accoutrement might help keeping flies away from him while ridden.

CHAPTER XXV

PUNISHMENT AND REWARD

So few, even among those who handle horses, know when and how to reward or punish, that a few lines on the subject may be useful.

In the first place a horse must never be rewarded, caressed, or even complimented, as a bribe to good behavior.

Thus if he refuses to go in a given direction, or to do his rider's will, and with still more reason if he misbehaves by cutting-up, kicking, bucking, or rearing, a horse must not be caressed, complimented, or otherwise rewarded, in view of being induced to composure and obedience.

An exception to this rule must nevertheless generally be observed when a horse is genuinely frightened by some object, especially if it be stalled, and when his rider wants him, not only to overcome his fear, but to familiarize himself with the cause of it.

The horse should then be made to stop in full view of that object, should be caressed, and spoken to coaxingly at each quarter of a step he takes in its direction, until he is quite close to it, smelling and otherwise "sizing it up," and when this point is reached both caresses and compliments should be emphasized.

The horse should also not be allowed to rush away, or to back away from it after that, else it would be "love's

labor lost," as the whole performance would have to be gone over again.

Whenever a horse acts incorrectly, makes a mistake, or misbehaves more or less seriously, he must be shown the errors of his ways by adequate punishment, and not be coaxed and caressed into "doing the right thing." Caresses must be bestowed only after the horse has made amends by doing his rider's will. Punishment must then fit the crime; therefore, the application of punishment remains largely a question of the rider's discrimination and good sense to realize whether the horse's offence is due to ignorance, to misunderstanding, or to sheer ill-will.

If "ignorance" is to blame, part of the fault being possibly the rider's, either for not having taught the horse properly, or for expecting too much of him, firmness in the "aids"—hands, but principally legs—mitigated perhaps with firmly coaxing voice—appeals may have the desired effect, after the obtention of which caresses are "de rigueur," especially in the case of an inexperienced horse.

If the trouble arises from "misunderstanding," the fault may again be due to some wrong impression or incorrect signal given by the rider, whom it then behooves to clarify his signals, to make his appeals—and again especially those from his legs—firmer and more decisive, simultaneously modulating his voice—appeals not only to suit the particular circumstances but to suit the modification his "aids" may cause in them.

For instance, it very often occurs that a horse will pretend not to wish to leave his stables, and the rider continuing to use opposite-rein actions in order to guide him, the animal will feign misunderstanding of the hand-signal, and seize the slightest opposite-rein tension to obey it as if it were a direct-rein action. ("Coming" to

the left, let us say, when the left-rein-on-the-neck signal—neckwise guidance—had been meant for him to “go” to the right.)

If in such a case the rider were to continue using opposite-rein indications, his mount’s disobedience would therefore be partly due to the man’s not modifying this rein action to suit the circumstance, and to his not defeating the horse’s cunning feint by immediately using direct-rein indications together with more vigorous lower-aid actions so as to force the animal to respond to the reins by going-up to the bit (in other words by increasing his movement forward).

In such a case—which is of practically common occurrence, especially with novice-riders—the rider would have made as much of a mistake by punishing the horse *after* having disobeyed the opposite-rein action, as by caressing him *before* he obeyed the direct-rein indication.

But if the trouble is due to “sheer ill-will,” the horse must be punished, proportionately to the offence, whenever possible.

Thus—according to the degree and importance of the offence, and according to the animal’s sensitiveness and standard of training, a scolding may be sufficient—even a simple “No,” in a sharp, commanding voice—or some more or less sharp and vigorous leg-actions—heels, and even spurs included—may be advisable (very rarely indeed any hand-action); or again the more or less sharp use of the riding-whip, preferably on the flanks and hind-quarters, may be absolutely necessary.

But the novice-rider should be discreet—which does not necessarily mean hesitant—when punishing with the whip because, if the horse were to react violently and unseat him, matters might become worse, quite as much at that instant as perhaps on some future occasion of a

like order, as then the horse, remembering that he had unseated his rider in a similar circumstance, might try, perhaps then successfully, to throw him off that time.

If he threw his rider he might take to doing the thing first as a habit, later—perhaps very soon after—as a vice.

But the rider, whether a novice or not, must never forget that he must not yield to anger while punishing, and that on the contrary, as far as in him lies, he must keep calm and serene, if possible even cheerful, because this attitude of his will influence the horse more than he may at first imagine.

Punishment of any sort should cease as instantly as the reason for its application subsides.

Caresses should be of the soft-firm, not of the soft-ticklish, order, and should therefore be given by means or one, or more, gentle strokes of the hand in the sense of the skin, followed by a couple of soft pats. No blows should be given, rarely strong pats.

Caresses given on the face, nozzle, head, or ears, must always be very soft, as these parts are exceedingly sensitive.

But whatever the sort of caress, and the place of it, the hand must be left a few seconds—were it not more than two or three—on the horse's body, as "staccato" pats have a tendency to irritate a horse and make him nervous, because of their provoking a ticklish sensation.

Sugar, carrots, and the like, should never be given a horse by his rider, not even for training purposes, Mr. Fillis' opinion to the contrary notwithstanding; they are food, and should therefore not intervene in his work. They ought consequently to be distributed to horses, for the amusement of ladies or children, when the animals are in their stables, and then not around working hours.

CHAPTER XXVI

ANALYSIS

Analysis plays an important part in the learning of anything at all, from elementary-school grammar to the highest forms of Science and Art.

By means of analysis comparisons are drawn between the subject-matter in course of study; the learner's efforts to grasp its rules and apply them correctly; and the best examples left of them by ancient and modern Masters of the Art, Craft, or Science involved.

In Horsemanship unfortunately, as especially exemplified in Greater New York, no such policy is apparently followed, teachers, with few exceptions, not applying themselves to give their pupils a uniform standard for doing things, some of them not even trying to give them their own position on horseback, which is a sorry comment on the esteem in which they hold their own style of riding!

They condemn and call "silly" what other riders do, and they themselves do not do, without offering any logical reason for their adverse comment. And when they see someone else doing something which they cannot achieve, or explain, they "pooh-pooh" the matter, and tell their pupils "not to look at other riders but mind your own horses."

Now: both in absence of oral explanations, and as supplementary to them, looking at other riders is *precisely* the thing to be done. But in order to derive full

benefit from it one must know how to look, and what to seek.

If one looks with the "I-ride-better-than-you" thought, analysis is impossible; if on the other hand one looks with the "I-shall-never-be-able-to-do-it" idea, the result will be similarly negative.

In order then to analyse fruitfully, the interested onlooker, putting momentarily aside his own personality, must, following the rules laid down at the beginning of this book, first ascertain whether the position of the rider under scrutiny conforms with them, and then see whether the horse obeys implicitly, and without fuss, his rider's indications.

If the rider's position on horseback does not conform to those rules, the interested onlooker must see how, in what respect, and to what extent, it deviates from them, and to what degree that rider's shortcomings are comparable to his own.

It should go without saying that if the rider under scrutiny is at the time handling a green, or a vicious horse, some positions of legs, hands, and torso, which might seem incorrect, may be perfectly correct under those peculiar circumstances.

Likewise; a green or a vicious horse may respond just then in a very uncouth manner to the "aids"—which in such cases are not usually applied with gentleness, nor should be so applied—and the animal's impetuous conduct could not therefore be laid at the rider's door.

The learner should also try to develop in himself the consciousness of how he looks when on horseback (to which end looking-glasses are so necessary in Riding Schools), and then see to what extent he resembles the object of his scrutiny, in order to imitate him if found better than himself, or to get rid of those of his short-

comings he may detect, and therefore be more prone to condemn, because of his seeing them in another rider.

Being students all our lives we should look at all the horses and study all the horsefolk we come across, in order to learn from all riders, the great and the small, applying ourselves to scrutinize them for the greater good of Horsemanship, and therefore with all due respect to a Great Man's dictum—"With justice to all and malice towards none."

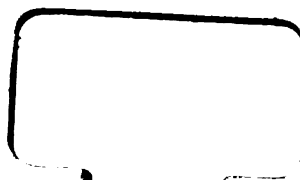
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